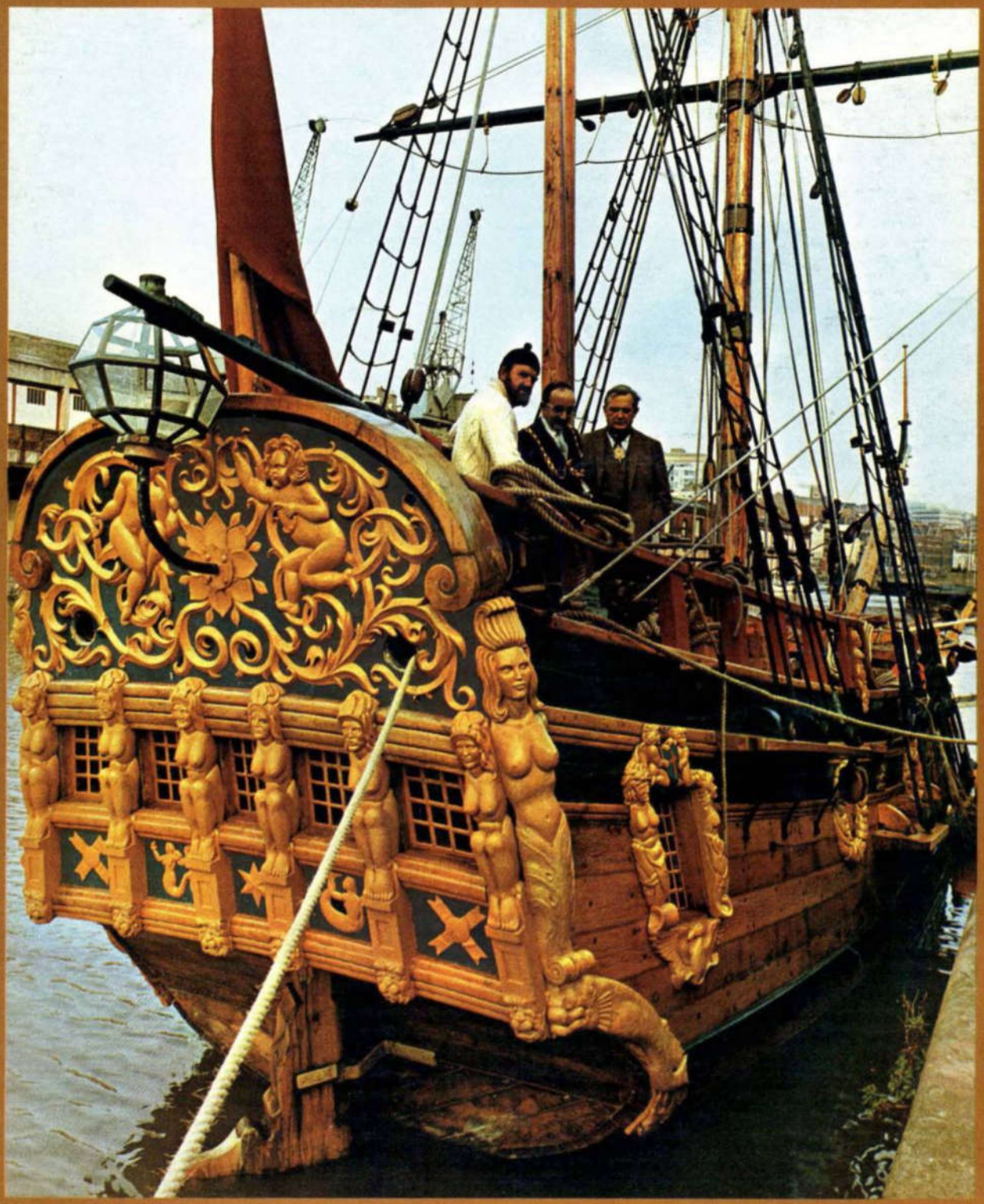
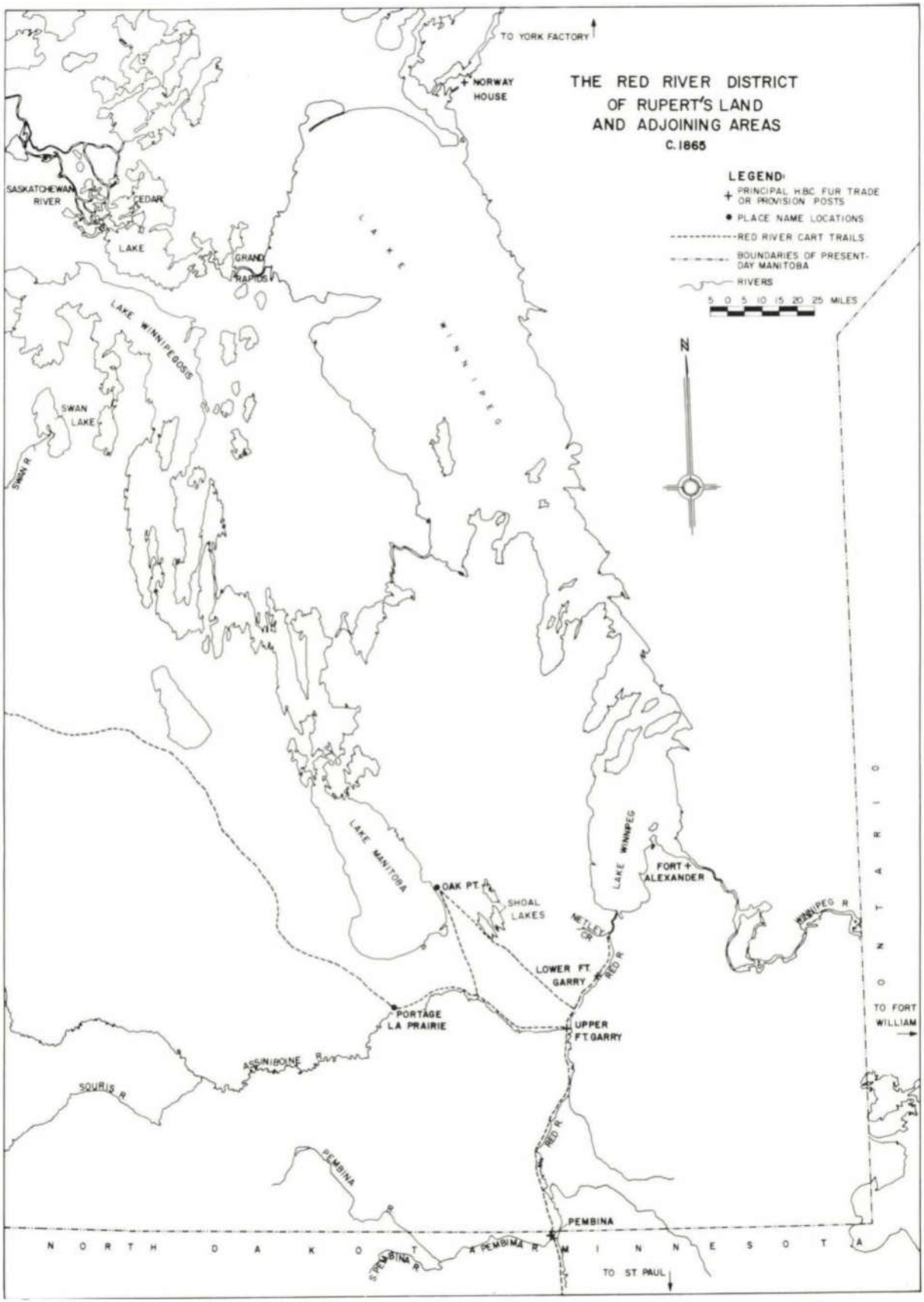
The Beaver

SUMMER 1970





This map relates to the story of Lower Fort Garry beginning on page 26.

The Beaver

MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

Editor: Malvina Bolus, SM

1970

SUMMER 1970
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COVER
Nonsuch II at Bristol in March 1970 when Captain Adrian Small received an official visit from the Lord Mayor (centre) and the Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers, Bristol, by whose courtesy this photograph, by Derek Balmer, is reproduced.

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE — Hudson's Bay Company — WINNIPEG 1, CANADA

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

Published by The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay, known as the Hudson's Bay Company. The interests of THE BEAVER cover the territory with which the Company has been or is now associated. Annual subscription, $3; three years for $8; single copy, 75 cents. While every care will be taken of manuscripts and illustrations submitted, no liability will be assumed for loss. Contents copyright. Printed in Canada.

Second class mail registration number 1401. Postage paid at Winnipeg.

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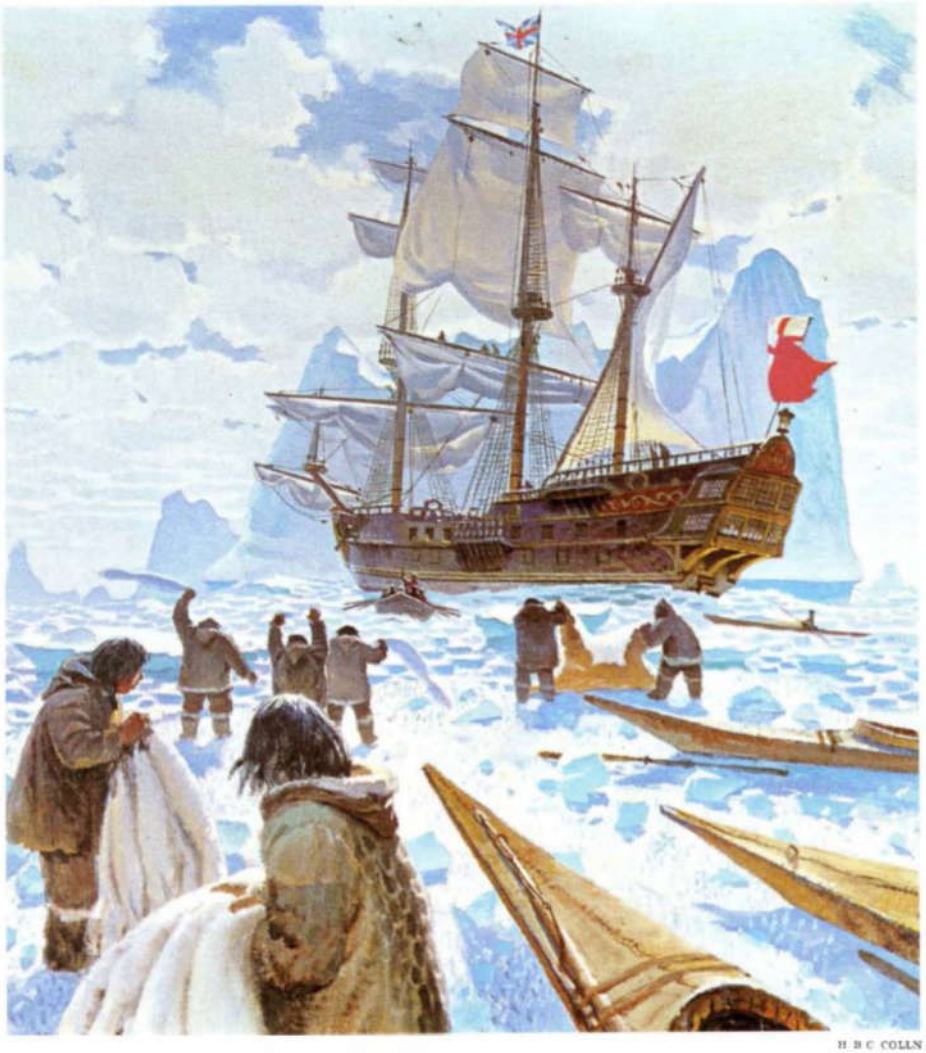
H B C COLLN

SHIPS OF THREE CENTURIES

by Alan Cameron



H B C COLLN

Editor of the monthly magazine of the Port of London Authority, Mr Cameron gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the publications of the Hudson's Bay Record Society for facts and information, to the Secretary and the Archivist of the Hudson's Bay Company in London, Mr R. A. Reynolds and Mrs J. Craig, for advice and assistance, and to the Company in Winnipeg for references.

A member of the Committee visits one of the Company ships anchored on the Thames at Gravesend prior to departure for Hudson Bay. From an original painting in Beaver House, London by A. R. Thompson, R.A.

(Left) Before the first permanent arctic trading posts were built Eskimos carried on trade with H B C ships anchored in Hudson Strait. From a painting by Franklin Arbuckle R.C.A.

(Right) The present-day supply ship 'Pierre Radisson' near Pangnirtung.

SHOPPERS at Hudson's Bay Company stores the length and breadth of modern Canada may not realize it, but they make their purchases from an organization which is not only the oldest chartered trading company in the world but also the oldest ship-owning company. The archives of the Hudson's Bay Company contain what is the longest documented saga of merchant seafaring ever written. In logbooks, letter books and minutes in 200 years of archives, and later filed reports, the story of 300 years of ship-owning and management is unfolded in the laconic phrases of ships' masters, the precise instructions of Governor and Committee, the copperplate handwriting of generations of forgotten clerks and the letters of countless factors and Company servants.

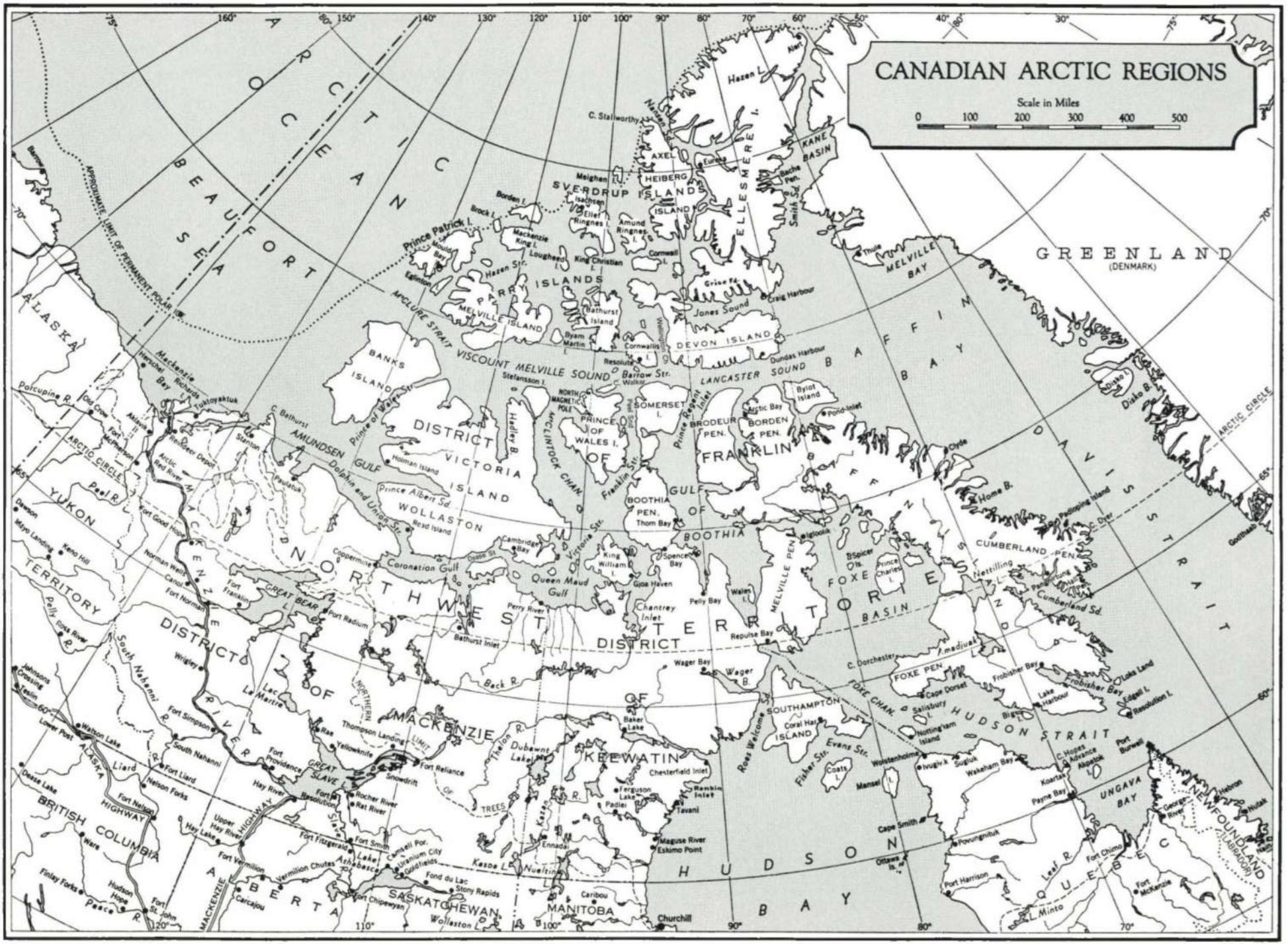
The saga is, in fact, a larger one than a history of seafaring for to the tale of the hazards of navigation within the Bay and on the Western Ocean can be added graphic accounts of the muscle-cracking labour of lugging packs, canoes, and York boats over rugged portages in Canada's interior. The greater story is that of transportation through the centuries. Among the serried records, too, we find documented the maritime exploration of the northern territories and their coastlines, along with the drama of the search for the elusive Northwest Passage.

But above all it is a saga of ships and the men who sailed them, of the sea battles they fought, their superhuman struggles with storm and ice and the endless privations which were the inescapable lot of seafarers until very recently. Ships, the men to man them, and finding the best sea routes, were the fundamental prerequisite for any ambitious and adventurous merchant who aimed at overseas trade. The Company records contain the thoughts of generations of Committee members on the suitability or otherwise of ships of the day.

In the exacting business of fleet management, there is the remarkable chapter of the Company's history when it managed millions of tons of shipping on behalf of the French Government during the first world war. Today, one ship, the *Pierre Radisson*, and a small tug and barge fleet are the latter day descendants of the *Nonsuch*, the eight *Prince Ruperts*, the clipper *Titania*, the steamers *Nascopie* and *Baychimo*, the motor vessel *Banksland* and the stern-wheelers of the Mackenzie and Saskatchewan Rivers. There are still captains and crews courageously tackling the hazards of arctic navigation with matter-of-fact nonchalance but today the saga is almost over and the 300-year story of H B C ship-owning is in its last chapter, symbolized by the construction of the replica *Nonsuch*. What follows is a sketchy outline of that story capturing, it is hoped, some of its fascination and drama.

When Groseilliers and Radisson persuaded influential 17th-century City of London merchants and courtiers that there was money to be made in shipping some of North America's fabulous fur wealth out via Hudson Bay rather than the St Lawrence which, in any case, was

FRED BRUEMMER


CANADIAN ARCTIC REGIONS
Scale in Miles
0 100 200 300 400 500
ARCTIC OCEAN
BEAUFORT SEA
APPROXIMATE LIMIT OF PERMANENT POLAR ICE
GREENLAND
(DENMARK)
ALASKA
YUKON TERRITORY
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE
DISTRICT OF KEEWATIN
FRANKLIN DISTRICT
BRITISH COLUMBIA
ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
MANITOBA
QUEBEC
NEWFOUNDLAND
(LABRADOR)
PRINCE PATRICK I.
MELVILLE ISLAND
PARRY ISLANDS
SVERDRUP ISLANDS
AXEL HEIBERG ISLAND
ELLESMERE I.
KANE BASIN
BANKS ISLAND
VICTORIA ISLAND
PRINCE OF WALES I.
SOMERSET I.
BORDEN PEN.
BRODEUR PEN.
DEVON ISLAND
BAFFIN BAY
DAVIS STRAIT
HUDSON BAY
HUDSON STRAIT
FOXE BASIN
FOXE CHAN.
FOXE PEN.
SOUTHAMPTON ISLAND
CUMBERLAND PEN.
UNGAVA BAY
AMUNDSEN GULF
BOOTHIA PEN.
ARCTIC CIRCLE
MACKENZIE RIVER
GREAT BEAR L.
GREAT SLAVE L.
Barrow
Aklavik
Mackenzie
Richards I.
Tuktoyaktuk
Herschel I.
Porcupine R.
Old Crow
Fort McPherson
Arctic Red River
Rengeer Depot
Stanton
C. Bathurst
Paulatuk
Holman Island
Prince of Wales Str.
Dolphin and Union Str.
Prince Albert Sd.
Read Island
Cambridge Bay
Coppermine
Coronation Gulf
Queen Maud Gulf
Victoria Str.
King William I.
Spence Bay
Gjoa Haven
Perry River
Chantrey Inlet
Pelly Bay
Repulse Bay
Wager Bay
Wager B.
Back R.
Baker Lake
Thelon R.
Dubawnt Lake
Chesterfield Inlet
Ferguson Lake
Padlei
Rankin Inlet
Tavani
Maguse River
Eskimo Point
Ennadai
Caribou
Churchill
Wollaston L.
Fond du Lac
Stony Rapids
Fort Chipewyan
Carcajou
Fort Vermilion
Vermilion Chutes
Athabasca R.
Lake Athabasca
Uranium City
Goldfields
Cameron Bay
Fort Fitzgerald
Fort Smith
Fort Resolution
Rocher River
Rat River
Snowdrift
Fort Reliance
Yellowknife
Rae
Thompson Landing
Lac La Martre
Wrigley
Fort Simpson
Fort Providence
Hay River
Upper Hay River
Hay Lake
Fort Liard
Nelson Forks
Lower Post
Watson Lake
Liard R.
South Nahanni R.
Fort Nelson
Fort St. John
Hudson Hope
Finlay Forks
Peace R.
Ware
Dease Lake
Johnsons Crossing
Teslin
Pelly River
Fort Norman
Norman Wells
Canol
Fort Franklin
Fort Good Hope
Mayo Landing
Keno Hill
Dawson
Peel R.
Arctic Red River
Milepost
Inuvik
Tuktoyaktuk
Mackenzie R.
Thelon R.
Kasba L.
Nueltin L.
Lac La Martre
Northern Limit of Trees
Great Slave Lake
Great Bear L.
Athabasca R.
Peace R.
Mackenzie R.
Liard R.
Pelly R.
Yukon
Alaska Highway
Mackenzie Highway
Arctic Circle
Prince Regent Inlet
Lancaster Sound
Jones Sound
Barrow Str.
Prince of Wales Str.
Franklin Str.
Melville Sound
Viscount Melville Sound
McClintock Chan.
Hazen Str.
Wellington Channel
Smith Sd.
Nansen Sd.
Ross Welcome Sd.
Fisher Str.
Evans Str.
Melville Pen.
Committee Bay
Boothia Pen.
Prince Regent Inlet
Lancaster Sound
Jones Sound
Craig Harbour
Grise Fd.
Thule
Melville Bay
Dundas Harbour
Resolute
Cornwallis I.
Bathurst Island
Byam Martin I.
Mould Bay
Prince Patrick I.
Borden I.
Brock I.
Meighen I.
Isachsen
Eureka
Alert
Hazen L.
C. Stallworthy
Axel Heiberg I.
Ellef Ringnes I.
Amund Ringnes I.
Cornwall I.
King Christian I.
Lougheed I.
Mackenzie King I.
Eglinton
Bylot Island
Arctic Bay
Pond Inlet
Clyde
Home B.
Padloping Island
C. Dyer
Baffin I.
Dike B.
Goodsell
Cape Dorset
Lake Harbour
Frobisher Bay
Lake Land
Edgell I.
Resolution I.
Salisbury
Nottingham Island
Ivugivik
Sugluk
Wakeham Bay
C. Hopes Advance
Akpatok I.
Port Burwell
Koartac
Payne Bay
Cape Smith
Povungnituk
Port Harrison
Leaf R.
Fort Chimo
George River
Hebron
Nutak
L. Minto
Fort McKenzie
Ottawa Is.
Coats I.
Mansel I.
Bacche Pen.
Prince Charles I.
Southampton I.
Coral Harbour
Melville Pen.
Boothia Pen.
Thom Bay
Gjoa Haven
Spencer Bay
King William I.
Victoria Str.
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Peace R.
Mackenzie R.
Liard R.
Pelly R.
Yukon
Alaska Highway
Mackenzie Highway
Arctic Circle
Approximate Limit of Permanent Polar Ice
Beaufort Sea
Arctic Ocean
Greenland
(Denmark)
Alaska
Yukon Territory
Northwest Territories
District of Mackenzie
District of Keewatin
Franklin District
British Columbia
Alberta
Saskatchewan
Manitoba
Quebec
Newfoundland
(Labrador)
Prince Patrick I.
Melville Island
Parry Islands
Sverdrup Islands
Axel Heiberg Island
Ellesmere I.
Kane Basin
Banks Island
Victoria Island
Prince of Wales I.
Somerset I.
Borden Pen.
Brodeur Pen.
Devon Island
Baffin Bay
Davis Strait
Hudson Bay
Hudson Strait
Foxe Basin
Foxe Chan.
Foxe Pen.
Southampton Island
Cumberland Pen.
Ungava Bay
Amundsen Gulf
Boothia Pen.
Arctic Circle
Mackenzie River
Great Bear L.
Great Slave L.

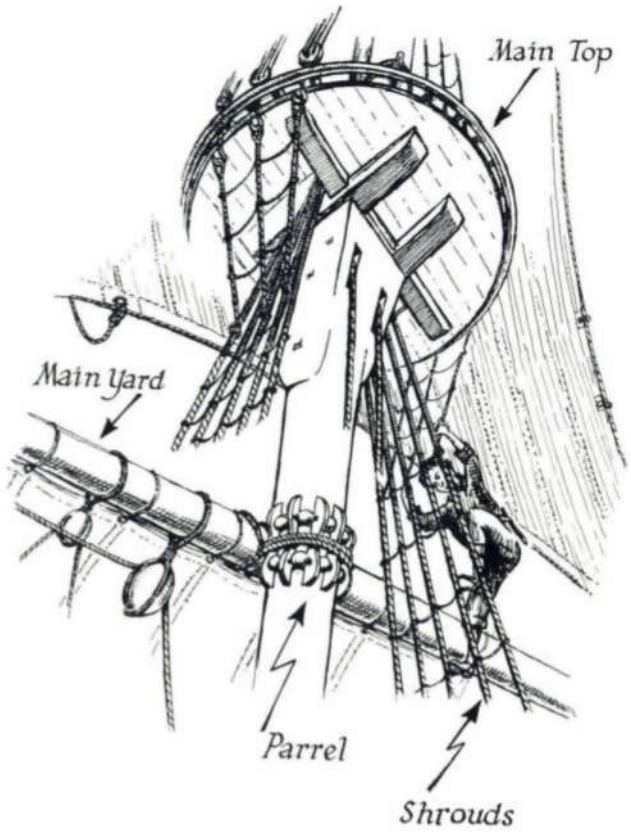
under French control, those shrewd City gentlemen knew, as did all merchant venturers, that the first practical step was the buying or chartering of a suitable ship. It could not be too big, for that would be too costly to buy, man and run—there was no point in being over lavish on what was an experimental voyage. Moreover the hazards of navigation in the uncharted waters of Hudson and James Bays had to be considered. The ship chosen would have to be stauncher than the average run of trading vessels to withstand possible battering by ice and the treacherous storms of the North Atlantic and the Bay.

In the event, they chose a ketch, a type that had proved its handiness in the sea trading of the time. And they nearly came to grief immediately. Groseilliers and Radisson brought their scheme to London from Oxford in 1667 and one of the group of men they talked to, Sir George Carteret, hastily blundered off and bought a ketch, the *Discovery*. Sir George could not have known much about ships for when more knowledgeable shipping men clapped eyes on her and started poking her timbers and fittings they roundly declared her quite unsuitable for a Western Ocean crossing and a possible search for the coveted Northwest Passage. So she was promptly sold at a loss of £70.

When the King's interest was awakened by these farsighted men, who were as interested in colonial development as in the profits of fur trading, he was persuaded to lend his ketch *Eaglet* for the venture to accompany the next ketch the group bought for £290 (about 12,000 modern Canadian dollars). This was the *Nonsuch*. The two ships left the Thames on 3 June 1668, but although she was well-found the *Eaglet* was just as unsuitable for Western Ocean work as the *Discovery* would have been, despite the fact that as the larger of the two ketches she was the expedition's main ship. The *Eaglet* proved unsuitable 'by reason of the deepness of her Wast unable to endure the Violent Stormes they mett with all'. So she turned back and left the little *Nonsuch* to sail into fame.

The episode serves as a reminder of the frighteningly small ships with which the world's maritime commerce was developed. One can well imagine the low-waisted *Eaglet* rolling and bucketing in a North Atlantic gale and shipping such tremendous quantities of green water on to her low deck that even the tough sailors of the 17th century, who took it as a matter of course that every voyage might be their last, judged it suicidal to try to fight her over to Hudson Bay. The tiny *Nonsuch*, only 37 feet long on the keel, made it out and back again, bringing a cargo of prime beaver furs which encouraged those pioneering sponsors to found the Hudson's Bay Company. Anyone who has seen the replica *Nonsuch* rolling and plunging in even a moderate gale can only marvel and fervently admire the calibre of the men who founded nations and empires with such tiny sailing craft.

How did such ships sail and handle? Better than one might imagine, according to *Nonsuch* II's Master,

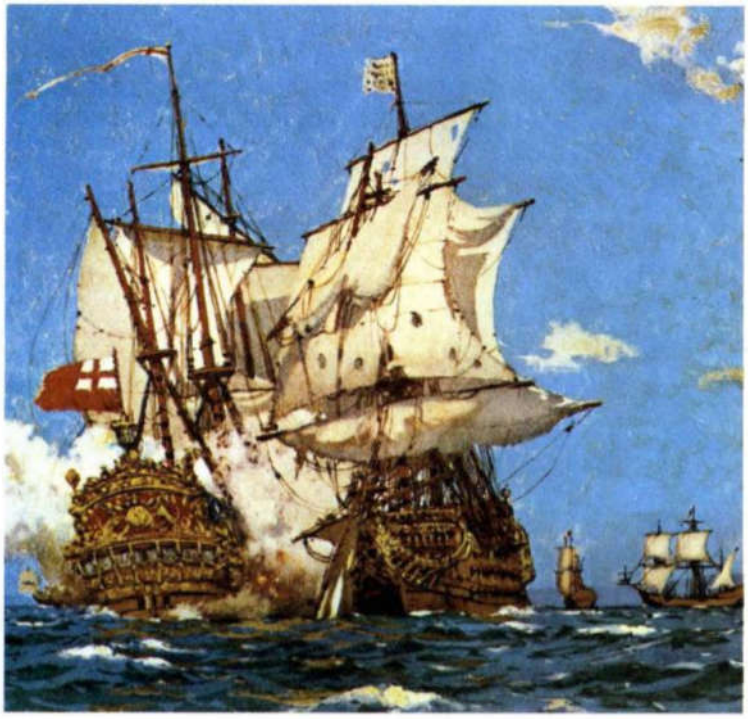


A view of 'Nonsuch II' looking aloft at the after side of the main mast. The parrel which held the yard to the mast has been replaced by 18th century 'truss tackles'.

Captain Adrian Small, who found that in fact she will sail four points off the wind. He confesses to being chary of saying this, since it is normally taken for granted that no square-rigger will sail closer than six points. But there it is. Having sailed his command over 2,000 miles he knows what she will do and how to make her do it.

One technical point about these early ships intrigues Captain Small. The yards were held to the mast with parrels and that prevents them from being braced round very much for then they foul the shrouds. Perhaps the parrels, always shown on ships of the period were no great handicap to practical mariners who saw no point in sailing so close to the wind that everything the ship gained in sailing upwind it lost in leeway. Nonetheless Captain Small has a suspicion that if a 17th century sailor could come aboard *Nonsuch* II he might exclaim as he scanned the ship's yards and parrels, 'But you are not doing so and so!' What Captain Small would like to know is that forgotten secret for it is undeniable that if the parrels are used as nautical research reveals them the yards simply cannot be braced round. It is equally certain that *Nonsuch* I did not sail to Hudson Bay and back without successfully coping with head winds.

So there we have an early insight into just one of the many complex skills involved in ocean navigation under sail.



The Battle of the Bay in 1697 ended swiftly when the English ship 'Hampshire' suddenly heeled over and sank. The French ship 'Pelican' under Iberville then captured the 'Hudson's Bay' and when the remainder of his fleet of five ships arrived, York Factory was forced to surrender. From a painting by Norman Wilkinson for the HBC.

One fact that attracts the notice of nautically minded visitors to *Nonsuch* II is the fact that her mainmast is stepped almost amidships. The viewer feels that a foremast is missing. In a sense it is, for the ketch evolved from an early type of sailing craft in which the foremast was later replaced by the handier fore and aft headsails.

The high angling, or 'steeving' of the bowsprit is another noticeable feature and this probably derives from the fact that until fore and aft rig developed to the point of carrying a jib as well as a foresail, it was not uncommon for a square sail, the spritsail, to be carried on a yard rigged below the bowsprit, and *Nonsuch* II now has such a sail. It was a very unhandy sail and soon replaced by the fore and aft jib sail. But the high angle of the bowsprit remained until the running bowsprit was developed in the cutter.

The Wivenhoe, Essex, shipwrights who built *Nonsuch* I also made the next vessel type which comes into the story, the *Wivenhoe*, presumed to be identical with the Navy vessel of that name. She was originally a ketch too, but for the 1670 voyage a third mast was added and she became pink-rigged. 'Pinks' figure largely in the Company fleet of the 18th century so it is necessary to find out what the Committee had in mind when they decided to buy or build pinks.

Modern thought tends to associate the name of a particular type of sailing vessel with a special arrangement of masts, sails and rigging. This was only a loose connection in the 17th and 18th centuries. Although a pink was usually a three-masted vessel she did not have to be. The Dutch called them *fluyts* and had a few two-masted types. The essential feature of a pink was her hull form and more particularly the shape of the stern. This was broad and round at the waterline and very narrow above. Pinks had round roomy hulls with flattish bottoms and for this reason were very widely used as merchant ships from 1600 onwards, especially in the second half of the 17th century. They were just the sort of roomy and sea-kindly vessel which a trading company such as the H B C would choose for the job of getting an endless variety of stores to their trading posts in North America. The Company's early problems were those of the present day transportation manager, with a few more besides. There is no need, for example, to equip the modern tugs and barges with cannon. Three hundred years ago means of self-defence were just as necessary to the ships of a merchant adventurer as masts and sails or a roomy hull.

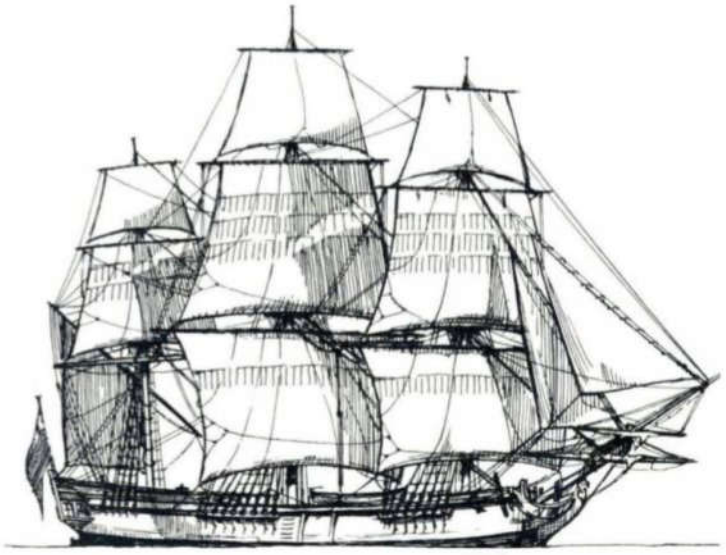
So as well as ordering 'that Edw. Buggby of Shadwell and Jno. Bridgar of Redriffe Coopers Doe the Compa. worke to be equally Divided between them', the Committee's minutes are strewn with references to powder, shot, ball, and 'great guns'. Getting everything into even a roomy pink's holds was not always easy, so it was not long before the Company was adding to its fleet. The first ship built to the Company's order was the *Prince Rupert*, ordered in 1669 from the Thames-side yard of John

Graves. The first of a long line of H B C ships of this name, she introduces us to another common ship type of the time, the frigate. Here again it is necessary to recall that our ancestors categorised ships by their function more than their rig. The term frigate has been very widely and loosely used over the centuries but at all times their essential feature was that they were speedy and handy and therefore their hull form was leaner than that of the rotund pink. As Falconer's *Marine Dictionary* of 1780 puts it a frigate was 'a light, nimble ship, built for the purposes of sailing swiftly'. So they were fully rigged, square on the fore and main masts and carrying a lateen sail on the mizzen at the time the first *Prince Rupert* was built. Later this lateen was replaced by the spanker or driver, spread by a boom and gaff, a more easily managed and useful sail. Frigates were well-armed for their size too with guns either side on one gundeck.

Since the Company was sometimes involved in sea battles with the French rivals of the British in North America, or recapturing Company forts they had taken, the choice of frigates was almost unavoidable. Being fast they also had the chance of outsailing a superior hostile force. Alternatively, its guns made it a useful unit of attack if circumstances suggested such a move. Frigates could always give a good account of themselves and their crews would sail and fight them anywhere without batting an eyelid—if they had to. Merchant ships did not seek battle; that was the Navy's job, though it was all one to a 17th century sailor. Any seaman on Thames-side in time of war had a hard job evading the Press Gang anyway, and according to Dr Johnson, even in the 18th century 'no man would go to sea who could contrive to get himself into prison, for a ship is but a floating prison with the added chance of being drowned'.

Not many men went to sea voluntarily for harsh though life was ashore, afloat it was even harsher with the dreaded scurvy adding to the frightful conditions which everyone on board had to endure as a matter of course. Getting seamen was always a problem and even the H B C applied for permission to press men, as a record of 26 February 1690 shows. Permission was refused; the Crown foreseeing an undesirable precedent.

Frigates and fighting seamen were the hallmarks of Company shipping activities for many years. Besides the hazards of ice, fog and storm in the Bay there was the ever-present threat of attack by French ships until the Treaty of Utrecht ceded Hudson Bay to Britain. Even on the way the guns might well have to be manned against pirates and privateers. When the 40-ton frigate *Albemarle* sailed from Gravesend in 1680 a Committee letter to John Nixon indicates the extent of this threat, this time from the corsairs of the Barbary States. The ships sailed 'by way of the North the winds favouringe that course and wee being in feare of the Turks, were not willing they Should Saile by the Westward'. Depredations on shipping by the Barbary States pirates did not end until the French capture of Algiers in 1830.



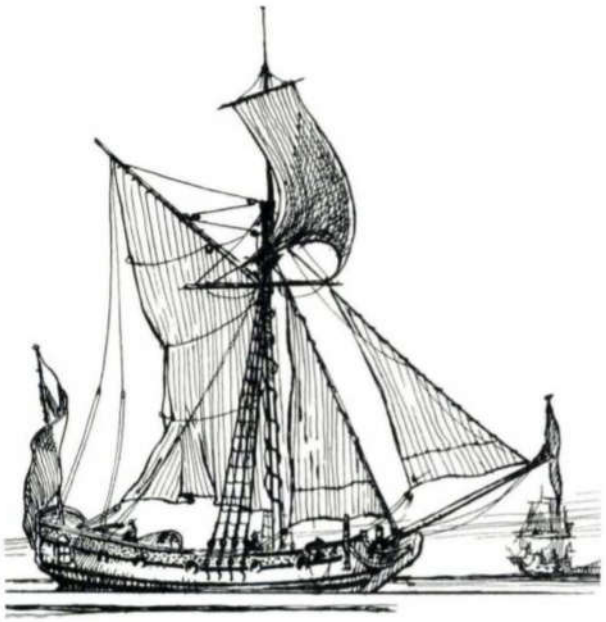
A Frigate of 1750

The Spritsail sets beneath the Bowsprit as in this early 18th century frigate ~

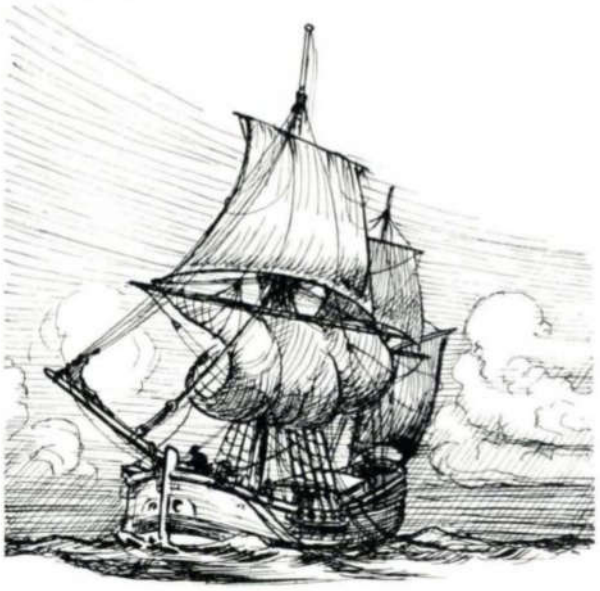
Along with the ketches, pinks, and frigates of the first century of Company shipping must be considered a few other types of ships and craft. Among these is one that causes some confusion. She was the dogger *Messenger*, not the messenger ship *Dogger* as some references would suggest. A dogger, from the Dutch *dogre*-boat according to Falconer, was like a ketch, having a main and mizzen masts. Later the term was applied to a Dutch smack of about 150 tons of the kind used in the North Sea herring fishery.

The 1672 voyage introduces the barque, in the shape of the *Employ*. The barque of the time was a development of the pink, being round and roomy. It was a three-masted vessel, usually without a mizzen topsail. In London River's coal trade the seamen of the commerce reserved the name for a ship broad-sterned above the waterline and having none of the ornamental work on prow and stern which was almost *de rigueur* for any self-respecting merchantman.

In 1679, launched to the Company's order from the Wapping yard of Francis Barham, junior, was the yacht *Colleton*. A yacht, or 'yaught' as the Committee frequently recorded the *Colleton*, was a comparative newcomer on the English shipping scene. We owe the word to the Dutch who presented a little Dutch *jaght*, the *Mary*, to the King when he returned from his exile in Holland. Here, what appealed to the King was the hitherto undreamt of comfort and convenience below decks of the jaghts. When the *Mary* came to London in 1660 everyone went to see her and she started a fashion which English shipwrights quickly copied. Handy, comfortable little craft, they not unnaturally struck the Committee as useful craft for Bay service, especially since they were shallow-draughted. This was an important consideration in the Bay, James Bay particularly being very shallow in many places. A shallow craft with leeboards instead of a deep keel would also navigate much better across the bars of the rivers which flowed into the Bay. The *Colleton* cost the Company around £170 according to a report to the Committee by John Nixon.

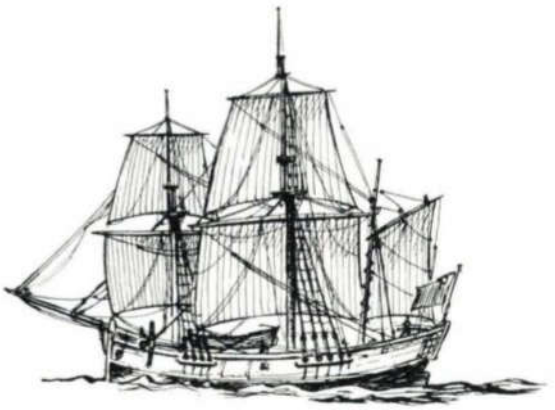


English Yacht 1770



A Dogger on the fishing grounds

The sketches on pages 7, 9, 10, and 11 are by Adrian Small, Captain of 'Nonsuch II'.



Small 18th C. barque

Though these Bay craft do not come into the ocean shipping story they deserve some passing mention because the larger ones had to make the Altantic crossing. Smaller ones were sent across 'in frames' or, as we would term it today, in a do-it-yourself kit. Mariners of the 17th and 18th centuries knew almost as much about building vessels as sailing them: they had to, for quite often major repairs had to be carried out on a hostile coast if they wanted to survive! Prefabricated vessels sent out included sloops and shallops.

The most reliable modern copy of a shallop is that constructed for the replica *Mayflower*. This shallop is shown with a sprit mainsail, jib, leeboards and with a tiller. She has a sharp stern so the shallop was evidently a 'double-ended' craft. The crews of Company ships of the 1670 voyage built one of these craft from local timber when they over-wintered in the Bay and Radisson used it to explore the western coastline of the Bay from Charles Fort. This must have been difficult for the shores of Hudson Bay are almost devoid of suitable ship timber. The point was made by James Knight, writing to the Committee from York Fort in 1716 and remarking that the building of a vessel on Churchill River would be 'the difficultest piece of work as ere was done in this country by the scarcity and distance of the timber as we have to fetch it'.

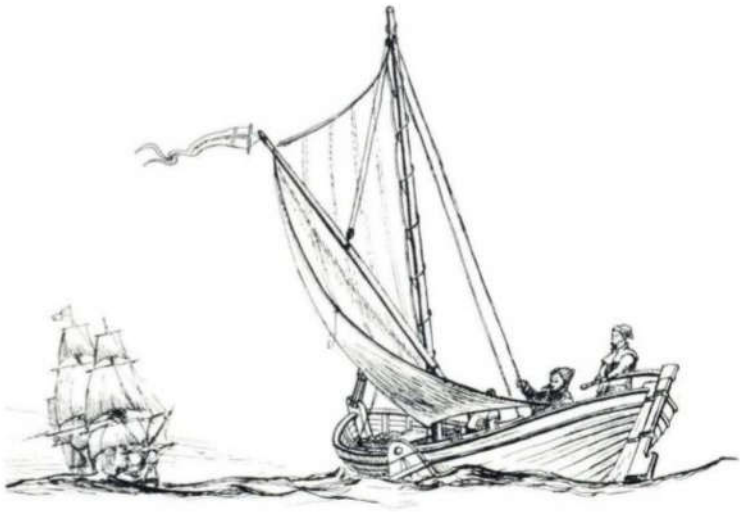
The Committee had sent him a do-it-yourself kit of parts but, as Knight complained, 'no carpenter to set her up'. She was sent as 'a small vessel with a small Boat to attend her, which you projected with us, in order for Discoverys'. The Northwest Passage was still very much in everyone's mind. Apparently no one was quite sure what kind of craft would emerge for the Committee referred to her as a yacht, Knight's later journal as a sloop, but when she was eventually assembled and launched by the men of York Fort *they* dubbed her a hoy! At any rate she was 36 feet long and 12 feet in beam with a 'Mast, Boome and Boltsprit', so we may regard her as typical of the sloops which plied the coastal trade of the Bay for so many years.

This sloop, the *Good Success*, or plain *Success* was built in the first place by a Mr Cretchet on Thames-side and cost £55. She was lost on a passage between York Fort and Churchill on 30 June 1721—quite a long life for a Bay sloop.

The confusion in describing her indicates the evolutionary changes which were taking place in fore and aft rig at the time. Twenty or so years later a purely fore and aft type, the schooner, was available as a choice for work in the Bay and the first to appear in the Company's fleet was the *Phoenix* in 1744. Her log book is amongst those held in the Hudson's Bay Company archives. Through the centuries the Committee was always well abreast of shipping developments and ready to take advantage of any promising technical innovations.

One shipping management problem, however, that the Company never really fully solved, was the question of what to do with its ships during the winter. The annual voyage could only be made in the summer months and a ship lying idle represented so much valuable capital uselessly tied up. Ships were expensive. The little 52-ton frigate *Yonge*, for example, cost £381 for hull and £235 1s 3d for stores and rigging when built in 1688. Attempts were made to employ the pink *Dering* profitably in the winter months of 1687-8. Later attempts to put ships to work in the coal trade between the Thames and England's northeast coalfields resulted in a loss rather than a profit. Today, the annual freighting voyages in the Central and Eastern Arctic districts employ one owned ship, the *Pierre Radisson*, a chartered vessel, and tugs and barges, for it is not economic to keep two ships in the fleet when one, at least, would be unused for a large part of the year. So the *Fort Severn*, a motor vessel of 373 grt, was sold in 1969 and replaced by a chartered ship, the *Twillingate*; the financial problems of owning versus chartering were still with the Company 283 years after the *Dering's* unsuccessful attempt to get round the problem.

One of the perennial unknowns of the problem was posed by the hazardous nature of navigation within the Bay. An early winter might easily catch a chartered ship and force her to overwinter in the Bay, thus breaking the terms of her charter party. Then, as now, this carried financial penalties. Through the years the Committee steered a delicate course in a mixed policy of both owning and chartering. Whether one bought or chartered depended, as always, on the shifts of the financial barometers of the City of London. There were other problems too, for suitable ships might not be available for charter. Ships on the Bay run had to be capable of withstanding battering by ice. Ice ended the careers of both the first ship the Company built, the *Prince Rupert* (I) and their first successful master, Captain Gillam. Both went down at Port Nelson on 21 October 1682.



~ *Shallop* ~

H B C COLLN

The H B C ships 'King George', 'Prince Rupert', and 'Seahorse', 1771, from a painting by Francis Holman.

Of navigation within the Bay, even today when echo sounders and radar have replaced lead-line and straining eyes, a present-day marine officer of the Company remarks, speaking of Churchill, 'it is a perfect nightmare of a place for the uninitiated mariner to try to enter; a very narrow entrance with shoal water all round. The anchorage space inside is very limited, as the water shoals very rapidly. Discharging cargo, or at least getting it ashore, is none too pleasant . . . it is impossible to work excepting at half tides, especially if spring tides are running'.

At Nelson and Hayes Rivers, where York Fort was established on the spit of land between the two rivers, the land is very flat and shallows out to sea for some miles. 'Even in moderately hazy or foggy weather it is difficult or even impossible to obtain a landfall.' When the S.S. *Erik*, the first Company steamship in the Bay, voyaged to York her captain greatly disliked navigating his ship in through the shallow waters of Port Nelson with no lights or headlands to guide him. Only on a clear day did the thin horizon show the narrow and faint line of the land.

No wonder that in 1715 Captain Davis in *Hudson's Bay* (III), could sail back and forth along the coast off Hayes River from August 24th to September 11th without being able to find the entrance to the river, eventually having to return to England without delivering his cargo. 'Anyone knowing the coast,' remarks a present-day writer, 'can readily understand this predicament especially if the weather was not clear.'

Of the ocean crossing let us bear in mind that the North Atlantic can toss up without warning every ocean threat a mariner can think of as the *Titanic* discovered to her fatal cost. Bay navigation apart, a sailing ship crossing the Western Ocean had to be well-found and her crew could expect to be wet and miserable on a bad crossing even if they escaped the dreaded scurvy from which Captain Newlands of the *Wivenhoe* died in 1670.

So the records are studded with ship losses, an inherent risk which overseas trading companies had to accept as part of the uncertainties of business in the age of sail. Later, even in the era of steam and motor ships the Company's Western Arctic operations were punctuated by losses of ships in the specially hazardous conditions of navigation through icefields.

Apart from natural hazards there were plenty of man-made ones in the turbulent early decades. Rivalry with the French in North America was productive of frequent tense local situations which might, or might not, end in actual battle even when France and Britain were officially at peace. The writ of European monarchs tended to be ignored in favour of local exigencies on the other side of the Atlantic! When an official state of war existed every sail that appeared on the horizon could be an enemy ship and there were anxious hours of waiting before it was known whether friend or foe was in sight. The prudent Captain had his guns run out just in case and gauged wind and weather estimating whether his frigate could outsail the other ship and so escape the necessity of battle—his job was to get supplies out and furs home.

But fights there were, in the Atlantic and the Bay. The French at Quebec were complaining by 1681 that the English at Hudson Bay were doing great damage to their fur trade and for ten years there was intermittent skirmishing between the English and the French. In 1685 the French encountered three Company ships in Hudson Strait, the *Success*, the *Happy Return* and the *Perpetuana Merchant*. The last they captured. The year 1689 was a bad one for the English. The enterprising and bold Frenchman Iberville had played havoc among Company ships. Between 1686 and '89 he captured the *Craven*, the *Colleton*, the *Yonge*, the *Churchill*, the *Huband*, the *Hayes* sloop, and a shallop! By September 1689 he was sailing the *Churchill* for Quebec, flying the King's Jack and the Company flag so when he encountered the *Dering* the

latter had no suspicion that the *Churchill* was in French hands. The two ships sailed in Company for several hundred miles as Captain Young took the *Dering* home with an excellent cargo of 27,201 beaver. English prisoners formed part of the crew of the *Churchill* so Iberville could not risk attacking the *Dering* which got home safely.

The biggest sea fight of the Company's history took place in 1697 when the intrepid Iberville took a fleet of five ships to the Bay, intent on driving the English out for good. In the *Pélican* he became separated from his other four ships, one of which, the *Esquimo*, seems to have been lost in the ice of Hudson Strait. Iberville sailed on for 500 miles to York Fort. Meanwhile, when fog lifted, the French ship *Profond* found herself sailing with the H B C ships *Dering* and *Hudson's Bay* along with an English man-o'-war, the *Hampshire*, convoying the Company ships against just this possibility of a French attack! The *Profond* escaped into the ice and the English ships sailed on to York Fort where they arrived on 6th September to Iberville's consternation. He was one 44-gun ship against the *Hampshire's* 52, the *Hudson's Bay's* 32 and the *Dering's* 30. By all the rules of naval warfare he should have been annihilated, but by brilliant tactics and an unexpected bit of luck, in that the *Hampshire* quite suddenly heeled over and sank, he won!

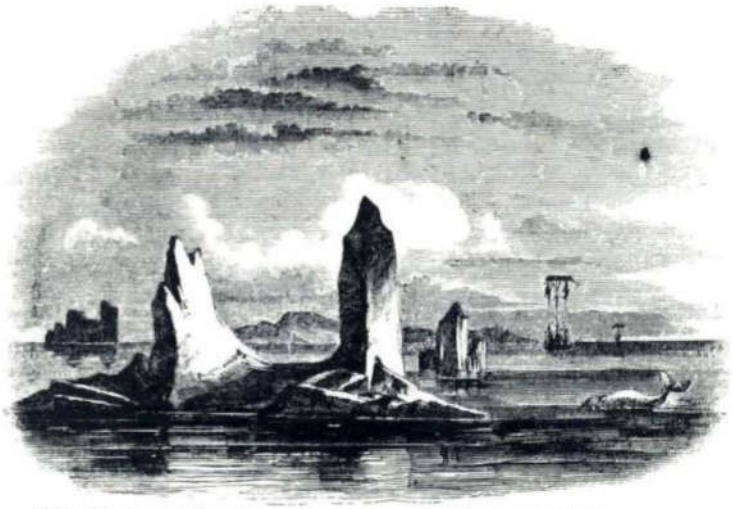
The battle had a touch of ancient bravado and chivalry about it, for at the height of the action both Iberville and Captain Fletcher toasted each other's gallantry with a glass of wine as they sailed alongside intent on finishing each other off. Why the *Hampshire* suddenly foundered with all hands is not certain but it seems most likely that she touched on a shoal and keeled over, another victim of the Bay's treachery, though Iberville's subsequent account has it that he despatched the English ship with his broadside. *Dering* fired one more broadside and then made off and the *Hudson's Bay* surrendered. No wonder Iberville was jubilant. Storm, however sank both the *Hudson's Bay* and the *Pélican* during the night. No matter, Iberville was master of the Bay.

On the other side of the Atlantic Britain and France were signing the Treaty of Ryswick and the Company demanded compensation to the tune of over £230,000.

Peace did not really come to the Bay until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 ceded it to Britain. Between 1690 and 1718 there was no dividend. But in the first four decades of the 18th century the Company's business prospered and ships were ordered regularly from what seems to have been the same firm which built most of the Company's ships for nearly 100 years. The name comes into the records in 1688 when the *Churchill* and *Yonge* frigates which Iberville captured were built by a John Taylor. The *Churchill*, of about 100 tons burden, cost £6 5s a ton and was launched on 2 May, 1688. In 1689 John Taylor built the first *Royal Hudson's Bay*, the one which surrendered to Iberville at York. This frigate, according to a Committee letter, was of 220 tons burden. In the same year a small frigate, the *Northwest Fox*, was ordered.

Next, a James Taylor, possibly John's son, enters the shipbuilding story. No other single man built so many ships for the Company. He began in 1696 with the frigate *Knight*. Sending this ship to Governor Knight in whose honour she was named, the Committee recorded in a letter to him that they had 'thought fitt to exceed the dimensions you wrote for in prospect she may bee of some defence upon ocasion which in respect to you wee call the *Knight* Frigtt'. Thereafter James Taylor was building ships for the H B C for 44 years. Among the many built at the same yards were the frigate *Mary* (I) in 1718, the *Whalebone* sloop in 1721, another *Mary* (II) in 1727 and a third of her name in 1728. In 1737 Mr. James Taylor and Company (senior and junior) built *Hudson's Bay* (V) and in the next year Messrs. Taylor and Co., shipwrights, built a fourth *Mary*. A pink, *Seahorse* (I) followed from Mr. James Taylor and Co. in 1734. Ten years later, James Taylor, presumably ageing and feeling the need for a younger partner, is recorded as building the frigate *Prince Rupert* (II) with John Randall. By 1760 John Randall is named alone as the builder of the *King George* (II) of about 220 tons and, in 1764, of *Seahorse* (II). Four years later John Randall's name is joined with that of John Gray in the building of *Prince Rupert* (IV), of 202 tons. John Randall, or more probably his heir, is back in the business in 1781 when the firm of Randall, Gray and Brent launched the *King George* (III) for the Company. *Seahorse* (III) came from the same yard in 1782 and the *Queen Charlotte* in 1790. In 1793 the *Prince of Wales* (I) was built for the H B C by Messrs. Randall and Brent.

Thereafter the firm's name disappears from the Company's historical records, replaced by another famous Thames-side shipbuilding yard, the Blackwall Yard of Wigram and Green which built the fifth *Prince Rupert* launched in 1827 as well as the sixth *Prince Rupert* and the *Prince Albert*, both launched in 1841.



The 'Prince Albert' in mirage described by J. B. Nevins M.D. aboard the 'Prince Rupert', 1842. 'She looked as if she were standing upon her mast ends in the ice,' a phenomenon distinctly seen in Hudson Strait.

A sailing ship weathers the wild winds and waters at the mouth of the Columbia River. From a painting of Cape Disappointment by H. J. Warre who was on the coast 1845-6.

In the hundred years during which the Taylor yard was building ship after ship for the Company there were naturally some considerable developments in shipbuilding. Frigates of the latter half of the 18th and of the early 19th centuries were ship-rigged, that is with square sails on all three masts but the barque rig proper as we know it today, square on fore and main, and fore-and-aft on the mizzen, was increasing in popularity because of its handiness and the fact that it required fewer men for the same carrying capacity as a ship-rigged vessel. The fifth *Prince Rupert* was just such a vessel. She was a splendid ship but fully laden she had difficulty in crossing the bar at York Factory and the Committee decided to build two smaller vessels, the *Prince Rupert* (VI) and *Prince Albert*, referred to above. R. M. Ballantyne, the novelist wrote a description of his voyage to Hudson Bay in 1841 as a Company apprentice aboard the *Prince Rupert* (VI).

Brigs, vessels with square sails on their two masts (fore and main), were in wide use, too, after their development in the coal trade of London River. A variant was the brigantine, square on the foremast and fore-and-aft rigged on the mainmast, though the early distinctions between brig and brigantine were less clear. The Company converted one of their Bay sloops, the *Beaver* built by Randall & Co. in 1780, to a brig when she was brought back to England in 1789. In her new rig she served on a voyage of discovery to the north of Churchill in 1791-2 and then served for many years between York and Severn and at the bottom of the Bay until her long career ended when she was broken up at Moose in 1813. So apart from crossing the Western Ocean seven times she survived some 33 years of Bay navigation, a credit to the seamanship of those who sailed her.

A brigantine figures in the fleet lists with the purchase of the *Ceres* in 1802. She could not have been very adaptable for she was sold in 1806.

Brigs, brigantines and schooners were favoured for Bay service, as well as the traditional sloop, in the 18th and 19th centuries. A brigantine, the *Mink*, was built at Rotherhithe on Thames-side as late as 1874 for use at Moose. A Bay schooner built two years earlier, the *Walrus*, was an exceptional vessel. Her master, Captain Henry Tuggey reported, 'I can safely say she is the finest vessel in bad weather ever I sailed in'. He had a bad passage out in her so he had ample opportunity to test her qualities. She came to her end in October 1876 when she was wrecked on the Labrador coast at George Island with the loss of all on board except one seaman. The schooner rig found its most perfect expression in Canada in the Grand Banks fishing schooners of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The type is superbly perpetuated in the replica *Bluenose*, whose original became a Canadian legend for her speed.

Through the 18th century the volume of cargo to be transported across the Atlantic grew steadily as trade increased. Pushing further and further inland with canoe and York boats the Company established more and more posts. Towards the end of the century Mackenzie discovered and travelled the great river named after him and, on 22 July 1793, this notable figure in the rival North West Company reached the Pacific coast overland. The significance of the achievement lies in the fact that he had proved a just feasible overland route from Canada's eastern seaboard to the Pacific whence there were no great impediments for a sea route to the East. The legendary Northwest Passage still eluded British merchants and indeed exploration of the northern part of the Canadian mainland had by then established that if such a sea passage existed ships using it would have to contend with the terrors of the Arctic all the way. But the fabulous wealth of the Orient, which the great East India Company exploited so profitably, was still a magnet. A

link between the vast inland transportation system of the Hudson's Bay Company with the Pacific North West and a sea route to the Orient opened tremendous possibilities. Until 1821, when the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company were joined, the older organization met the energetic competition of its younger rival with the famous York boats on the inland trade routes. By 1821, however, there were pressing political reasons for seeking other routes to the Pacific than by the Columbia River for it was uncertain in the then boundary dispute with America, whether this river would be available.

At any rate the uncertainties and disputes of the first two decades of the 19th century led the Company to send its first ship to the Columbia River in 1821 to supply the newly gained posts west of the Rockies. So its mariners joined the famous ranks of the Cape Horners. (The Panama Canal was not opened until 1914). The brig *Lively* was chartered to bring the 1822-3 trade returns from Columbia to England. In 1823 came the brig *Vigilant* and in 1824 the *William and Ann*.

The Horn held known terrors; the Pacific North West's were a new set, for navigation on this coast is difficult in the extreme by sail. Though it did not contain ice hazards like the Hudson Strait, the bar of the Columbia River alone was as dangerous a piece of water as any navigator was ever likely to encounter. The little brigs, rarely more than 300 tons, were tossed about like corks where the mighty Columbia met the sea. They were sailing in uncharted waters and in the wild waters that wind against tide could produce at the Columbia River bar, a leadsman could give no great help. A master could just pray that he would not encounter a shoal. But all too often he did. The *William and Ann* was lost in these tumultuous waters as was the *Isabella*. Other vessels which had to brave the Columbia were the *Dryad*, *Eagle*, *Nereide*, *Ganymede* and many more.

As in Hudson Bay, it was essential to have ships permanently based on the coast to trade, explore, and expand trade. Crews were not easily obtainable, especially when they got to know of the belligerence of the natives. In the end crews for the district's vessels were virtually press-ganged inasmuch as it was made a condition of their engagement that they had to transfer from the ships which made the annual voyage to the vessel stationed on the coast if required to do so. They did not relish this at all, especially when the schooner *Cadboro* was sent out in 1827 to remain on the coast. Chief Factor James McMillan pointed out an elementary principle of sea skirmishing to Governor Simpson who wrote to the effect that 'the *Cadboro* is quite unfit for the Trade, there are hundreds of War Canoes, on the Coast, longer & higher out of the Water than she is, carrying from 40 to 50 men each'. When the warlike natives attacked with their canoes it was all too obvious that it was much more difficult to repel boarders who jumped down on you than those who had to clamber up a ship's side! It was not possible to maintain a *pax Britannica* with such an unimpressive little vessel as the 70-ton *Cadboro*. What was needed, Chief Factor John McLoughlin and Governor Simpson told the Committee in London, was a vessel of the order of 200 tons, not 70.

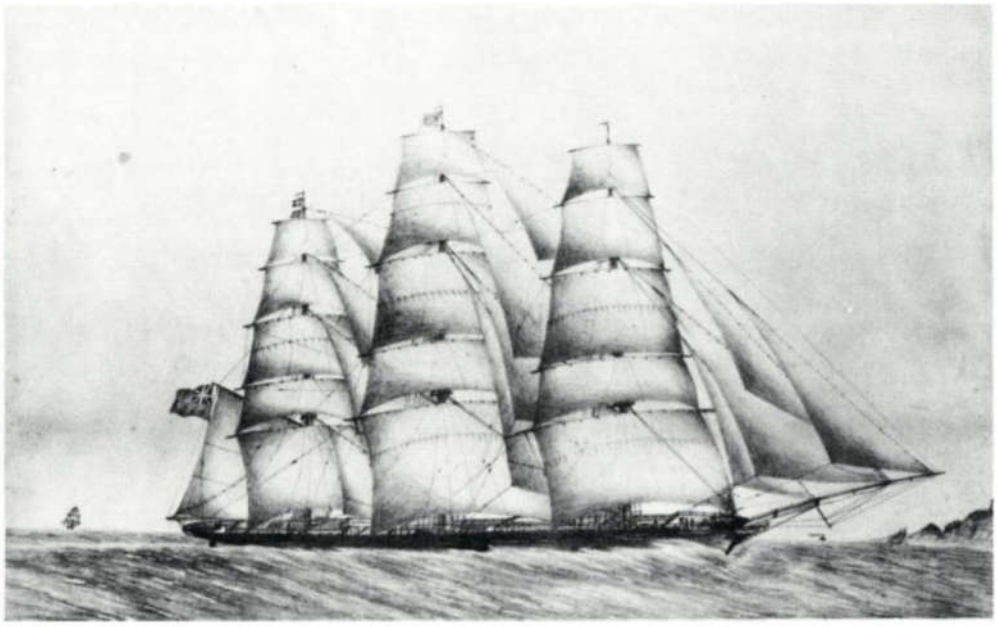
London shipping men needed no lesson in tactics from Columbia; they had already formed the same opinion and completed plans to keep a big ship on the coast. She was to be one of a fleet of three similar ships so that a common store of equipment and spars would serve them all. The bar of the Columbia upset this scheme when it wrecked the *William and Ann* with the loss of all her stores and most of her crew. The dangers from navigational hazards and savage natives led to the decision to keep two ships on the coast and to send out two years' outfits to meet the chronic shortage of trading goods. This was done in 1829.

The London Committee and Governor Simpson were also anxious to develop the Pacific trade with the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. Ideas in this direction were germinated as soon as Mackenzie reached the Pacific coast from inland. Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia, established in place of Fort George (formerly Astoria) in 1824-5, was the important entrepôt and shipping terminal of the area whilst the Committee chose Honolulu, as the main port of the Sandwich Islands, for the establishment of a trading and trans-shipment point from which to conduct the trading on the Pacific trade route.

Sailing out via the Horn ships from England brought manufactured goods of all kinds to Honolulu, loaded there foodstuffs such as sugar, salt and molasses, rice and coffee for shipment to Fort Vancouver and then loaded not only the Columbia district's trade returns for England but also cargo for the Sandwich Islands. This cargo included timber, for Hawaii, like Hudson Bay coastlands, was short of good building materials.

This was a far more rewarding use of shipping tonnage and the fact is illustrated by the expansion of the Company's fleet which, with owned and chartered ships, was among the leading ocean carriers between 1830 and 1860 in the expanding commerce of the whole American Pacific coast, of the Sandwich Islands and their trading links with Europe. To conduct trade between Columbia and the Sandwich Islands, McLoughlin was courageous enough to break a Company rule by actually buying a ship on his own initiative, the American brig *Lama*, in order to meet a temporary shortage of tonnage. After sending him a formal reproof the Committee had the grace to acknowledge that his act was a wise one.

Year after year Company ships braved the Western Ocean storms to Hudson Bay and the fury of the Horn to the Pacific. Shipping management by the Company was on a bigger scale than ever before with the expansion of the Pacific trade. As early as 1836 there were no fewer than seven ships engaged in that commerce, either permanently stationed on the Columbia coast or sailing the annual voyage from England. After 1846 Fort Victoria replaced Fort Vancouver as the terminal for the ships that came round the Horn. By 1885 the trans-



A pencil drawing entitled 'Honble Hudsons Bay Co's ship Titania' unsigned but believed to be the work of Captain J. L. Dunn, her Master 1886-90.

Canada railroad had reached the Pacific coast so by the 1890s the Governor and Committee felt that this facility, along with the increased sail and steam services to the Pacific, made it no longer necessary for the Company to own its own ships for the Pacific run. The *Titania*, mentioned below, had been sold by 1893.

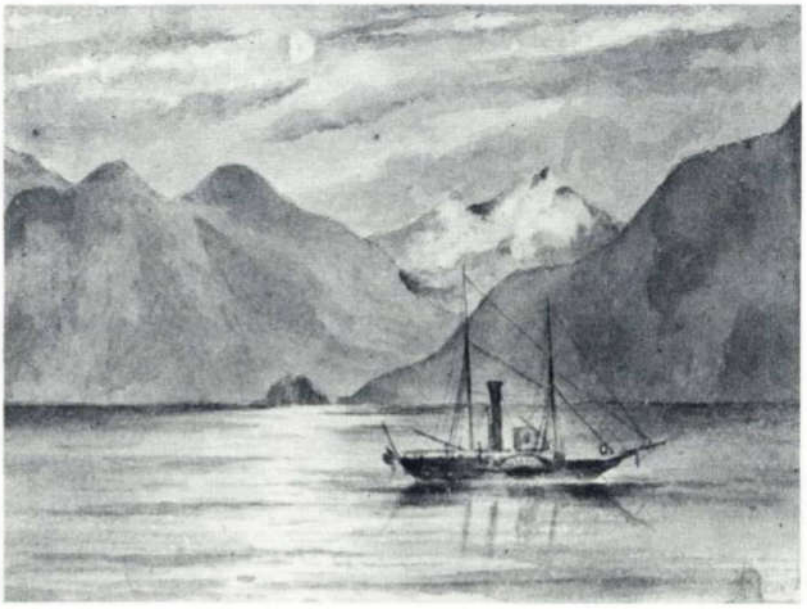
One of the Company's most famous Cape Horners was this ship, the clipper *Titania*, bought with the true clipper's ship rig but converted to barque. She was a fast ship, a clipper talked of in company with such famous fliers as the *Ariel* and *Taeping*. She once made a passage from London to Vancouver in 105 days. The Company's ships were, as always, representative of the best of the day so the fast and handy barque rig which developed from the clipper ship's short supremacy appears often in the fleet of the last half of the 19th century, though few were as lean and fast as the *Titania*. Among the more notable barques were such vessels as the *Lady Head*, credited with the fastest sail crossing of the Atlantic of any ship in the Company's service. She was on the Moose run from 1865 to 1870. Another barque, the *Lady Lampson*, served on the Pacific run as did the *Glaramara*. A brigantine, too, served on the Pacific North West coast, the *Mary Dare*.

Sail still ruled the oceans, for the comparative inefficiency of early steam engines demanded inordinate quantities of bunkers, so steamers rarely crossed the oceans until the latter half of the 19th century. Although the *Sirius* became the first ship to cross the Atlantic under continuous steam power as early as 1838 she had steamed her last miles only by burning cabin furniture!

The picture was different in river and coastal navigation. America saw its first river passenger steamer at Philadelphia as early as 1790 and by 1810 Fulton's *Clermont* was operating at a profit on the Hudson River. Before many years had passed, swaggering steamboat skippers of the Hudson River were ordering their engineers to tie down the safety valves in order to win the races they indulged in. The Thames, on whose banks the Committee laboured in London, got its first steamer, the *Marjorie*, in 1813 so they were receptive to Governor Simpson's suggestion that a steamer might be useful in the Pacific North West as a distinct advantage over their American rivals in the coastal trade and as an impressive spectacle to quell the unruly Indians. Having seen with their own eyes how reliable the steamers of London River could be, the idea of a trading vessel which was not at the mercy of the winds appealed to them so the scene was set for the advent of the Company's first steam vessel, the famous *Beaver*.

She was ordered on 9 June 1834, from a Thames yard, launched on 2 May 1835 and sailed out from Gravesend on 29 August as a brig with her paddle wheels and other machinery safely stowed in her holds. She sailed out in company with the new barque *Columbia* which was detained some time on the coast so that her carpenter could assist in the rigging of the *Beaver's* paddles. The *Beaver* was 101 feet long, 20 feet in beam and 11 feet deep in the hold.

She could not possibly have steamed out to the North Pacific for, to modern ears, the most shattering information about her was her unbelievable appetite for wood fuel. She consumed 40 cords of wood in one day's steaming (a cord is 8 ft. by 4 ft. by 4 ft.)—5,120 cubic feet of timber! It took six men chopping for two days to provide that. It took some little while for these implications of her engineer's demands to sink in but when things settled down after she first paddled off on 18 June 1836, after



GLENBOW-ALBERTA INSTITUTE

Nass Bay, about fifty miles north of Prince Rupert, near the Alaskan border. From a watercolour by Lieut. George S. Brodie who served in S.S. 'Beaver' 1865-70 during her Admiralty charter. The paddlewheeler here is probably the Company vessel.

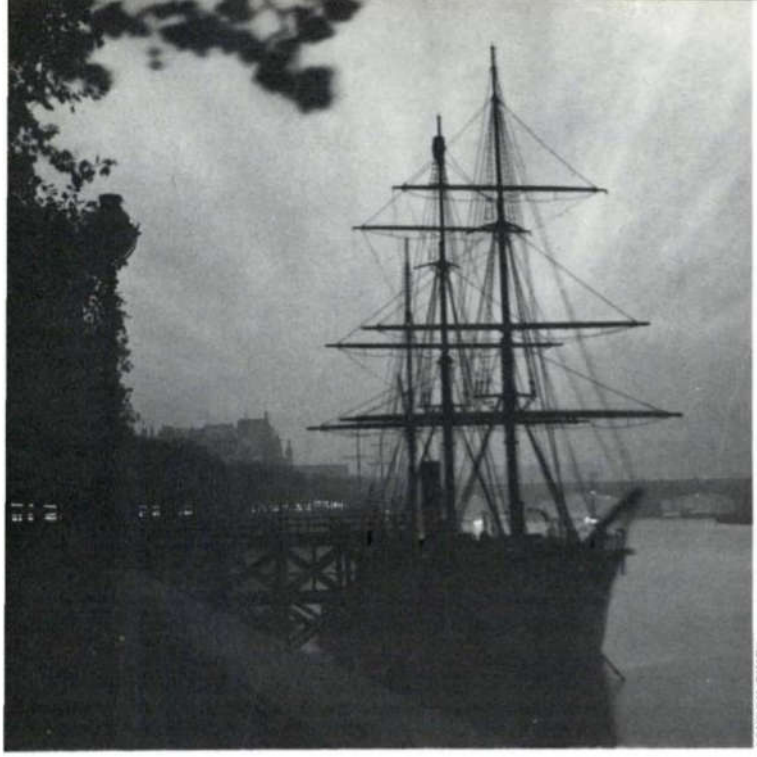
two trial runs, a gang was kept permanently employed in chopping to feed her hungry furnaces. Unless there were several thousand cubic feet of lumber ready chopped to her engineer's taste at her points of call, she lost a couple of days steaming. So, although she was not an easy ship to use effectively she revolutionised trade on the coast. She averaged 30 miles of steaming a day and as the first steamer in the area she also duly impressed the natives so that in face of this white man's marvel they became, for a time, a little more docile. She slap-slapped her way up and down the coast from the Columbia River to Alaska, playing many important roles in her long life and her furnaces must have made quite a sizeable contribution to the clearance of coastal woodlands. Governor Simpson even suggested that in the relatively protected waters between Puget Sound and Cross Sound (near Juneau) she might also tow a decked 150-ton lighter but the idea seems never to have been adopted.

In 1858 she carried many of the miners during the Fraser River gold fever and was later given a refit and provided with passenger cabins for service between Victoria and New Westminster. In 1862 the White Ensign replaced the Company house flag for the Navy chartered her for coastal survey work. The instructions to her Naval commander, Captain Daniel R. Pender included orders to carry out a peace-keeping role preserving law and order so the *Beaver* got a little one-pounder gun on her fore-deck. The bang was often enough to affirm the *pax Britannica* among the unruly.

She survived grounding on rocks off Vancouver Island, collected wanted criminals, and placed buoys and navigation beacons as well as charting nearly 1,000 miles of coastline, finding many new anchorages in the process and generally opening up new areas to coastal navigation. She came back under the Company flag on 21 December 1870, with due Naval pomp and ceremony. Four years later she had outlived her usefulness to the Company and she was sold for supply runs to logging camps and finally ended her long life as a wreck at Prospect Point near the entrance to Vancouver harbour in 1888.

Before her day was over the Company had acquired a steamer for the Atlantic voyage on the other side of the continent. In 1888 the Committee judged that steamships were then superior to sailing vessels for ocean work and bought the *Erik*, an ex-whaler built of solid oak in Dundee as a barque-rigged steamer in 1865. Her builders, Gourlays, must have made a splendid job of her for she was still completely sound when U-156 sank her on 25 August 1918. The submarine which sank her did not survive either for she never returned to port after this cruise. The Company had sold the *Erik* in 1901 to a Newfoundland company who used her as a sealer.

It is sometimes forgotten that another famous steamer owned by the Company still lies afloat in the Thames not far from Beaver House, 'Scott's *Discovery*', as she is usually called. Under the care of the Royal Navy at a permanent mooring in King's Reach, she is one of the tourist attractions of London. The many visitors who tread her decks and examine the Scott relics rarely realize that they are aboard the only ex-Company ship now to be seen in the river from which the Adventurers sent forth their first ship in 1668. The *Discovery* sailed on many voyages from West India Dock to Charlton Island between 1905 and 1919. She came under the H B C flag after Captain Robert Falcon Scott's national Antarctic expedition of 1901-4 and voyaged to Russia as well as Hudson Bay in the period when the Company managed many millions of tons of merchant shipping on behalf of



The 'Discovery' at her permanent mooring in King's Reach on the Thames, photographed by moonlight during the black-out period in 1939.

the French Government during the first world war. The *Discovery* was sold by the Company in 1923.

From these war years date a number of other famous Company steamers, including the legendary S.S. *Nascopie* and the S.S. *Pelican*. Both ships had encounters with enemy submarines for which they received Admiralty awards. The *Nascopie* sank hers in 1917 with her fourth shot, on a return voyage from Archangel delivering munitions; the *Pelican* damaged and presumably sank another in the Atlantic in 1918 after an action lasting an hour and a half.

The *Nascopie* was built on the Tyne in England and was specially designed for the Company, with ice-strengthening for Arctic work, and delivered in 1912. The last annual supply voyage from England was sailed in 1911 and the *Nascopie* loaded for her first supply voyage of 1912 in St. John's. Thereafter the annual voyage was sailed from Montreal though the *Nascopie* continued to be maintained in the United Kingdom during the winter months until June 1933 when she made the last regular trans-Atlantic crossing.

The *Nascopie* was dodging submarines again in the second world war and survived to meet her end in the northern waters she plied so long. She finally fell victim to that perennial hazard which had dogged Hudson's Bay Company seamen through the centuries, an uncharted reef, this one off Beacon Island at the entrance to Cape Dorset harbour. Her long reign in the Arctic seas ended on 21 July 1947. The only steamer to serve the Company longer was the S.S. *Beaver*.

Probably the most popular and well-known of all the H B C steamers, the *Nascopie* on her freighting and supply runs was 'as faithful as the seasons' in her annual visits to the remote posts and stores of the Arctic. No other Company ship is remembered with such affection.

When the Western Arctic district was opened up with the establishment of a trading post at Herschel Island in 1915 the age-old hazards of ice took a heavy toll of ships over the years. Herschel became the Western Arctic transportation headquarters and remained so until the the twenties. Supplies came from Vancouver by sea through Bering Strait and round Point Barrow. The Company's *Fort Macpherson* and the chartered M.V. *Ruby* failed to reach Herschel in 1914, wintered in Alaska, and delivered their supplies the following year. To avoid the hazardous and short-season ocean route, Tuktoyaktuk near the Mackenzie delta was made a distribution point, with freight carried down by the Mackenzie River Transport system.

Successful supply voyages were made by the chartered schooner *Herman* in 1917 and the following year by the chartered M.V. *Bender Bros.* In 1920 a ship specially designed for the job, the *Lady Kindersley*, took over this supply run but in 1924 she was trapped, crushed and abandoned in the relentless pack ice. The crew, saved by the U.S.S. *Boxer*, were transferred to the S.S. *Baychimo*, a ship noteworthy for having supplied the Company's Siberian posts in 1922 and 1923. These posts were abandoned in that year and the *Baychimo* joined the *Lady Kindersley* on Western Arctic work. She survived Point Barrow's malevolent ice until 1931 when it finally claimed her. The rescue of her crew made a minor first in Company history in that, for the first time, a crew was rescued by air. The *Baychimo*, locked in the ice, filled a romantic gap in H B C history—she became the Company's ghost ship, for she was seen on odd occasions. She was sighted in 1932 and boarded the following year, since when there have been many unverified reports of sightings. Supply voyages of 1932 and 1933 were equally beset by ice troubles and from 1934 onwards it was decided to send all supplies via the Mackenzie River with Tuktuk as the base. The *Fort James*, first ship to operate the new system was also lost in the Arctic in a gale on 5 August 1937.

The power of steam and diesel engine, though it made voyages possible where it would have been unthinkable to use a sailing ship, could not protect ships from the fantastic power of the crushing grip of ice. Nonetheless, it was in these Arctic operations, both east and west, that the long sought trade link through the Northwest Passage was finally established when the *Fort Macpherson* met the *Fort James* from the east at Gjoa Haven in 1930. The *Fort Macpherson*, too, was subsequently lost and the next such meeting did not occur until 1937 when the famous *Nascopie* from the east met the motor schooner *Aklavik* in Bellot Strait.

The 'Nascopie' takes on a load at Charlton Island. Both she and the 'Pelican' (below) had encounters with submarines. Note pelicans on the figure head of the 'Pelican' as she lies at anchor in Churchill harbour.

The toll of ships continued to be heavy and after 1958, when the Mackenzie River transportation operations were sold to the government owned Northern Transportation Company it was a logical extension to turn over the Western Arctic freighting to them in 1963. The *Fort Hearne* had been lost in 1961 and the M.V. *Banksland* was sold to that company.

Navigation in the Eastern Arctic, though exacting enough, was not quite so dangerous as in the Western Arctic and demanded less specialized ships than an area where an actual ice-breaker was essential. There were menaces enough and to spare, however. The *Bayeskimo*, for example, was lost through ice damage in Ungava Bay in 1925. The specially difficult seas which were the H B C's area continued to tax the ingenuity and resources of both Company and their sailors, but in the main the supply and freight pattern was not greatly different from that of 300 years earlier.

From 1912 onwards, the annual supplies were loaded in Montreal, though the supply ship continued to winter in the United Kingdom, making an annual Atlantic voyage each year until 1933. From 1934 the ship (S.S. *Nascopie*) was managed by the Canadian Committee and no longer wintered in the United Kingdom. From the main Bay ports supplies were distributed to 'satellite' posts and stores by smaller local craft, the descendants of the traditional Bay sloops, shallops, and schooners. After the completion of the Hudson Bay Railway to Churchill in 1929 and the Ontario Northland Railway to Moosoonee in 1932, it was possible to use these places, like Montreal, as sources rather than delivery points supplied by sea.

During the spring 1936 the 'Fort James' was badly crushed by ice and was hauled out for repairs at Tuktoyaktuk. The next year, en route to Bernard Harbour, she was caught by the ice pack and sank.

Increasing freight volume caused the *Bayeskimo's* successor, the *Bayrupert*, to be built bigger but her life was a short one. She struck the Clinker Rock on the Labrador coast during her second voyage into the Bay in 1927. The *Nascopie* was replaced by the *Rupertsland*, a small ice-strengthened coaster, launched in 1948. She was really too small for the volume of stores and freight to be carried and so the (1,753 dwt) *Montclair* was bought and renamed *Pierre Radisson*, to join the Company in 1960.

Today's shipping and supply operations in the Eastern and Central Arctic, involving some 12,000 tons of freight each year, are a three-fold activity based on, first, the traditional Company-owned vessel, the *Pierre Radisson*, from Montreal, second, on a chartered ship similarly making annual voyages from Montreal but taking advantage of Churchill's rail connection to pick up freight there, and third, on a tug and barge fleet operating from Moosoonee and freighting to posts and stores at the bottom of the Bay and as far up its eastern coast as Povungnituk.

There are differences from the pattern of the past. The ancient posts and factories, such as Moose Factory, Rupert's House, Severn, Eastmain, and Fort George no longer wait anxiously once a year for news of the annual ships from England. The ships from Montreal can make several voyages a year, whilst the tug and barge fleet makes trips from Moosonee as soon as there is sufficient cargo for any particular place. After that everything works, as in the past, in accordance with weather and ice conditions. The tide rips of Hudson Strait, where tides of 30 and 40 feet are common, have lost none of their turbulence and dangers which Henry Hudson first remarked. Both Hudson Bay and James Bay are still largely uncharted in detail and as dangerous to navigators as ever. Information about soundings, location of islands and other data throughout the Arctic are passed on by the masters of Company ships to the Hydrographic Service where they are incorporated in official charts. At the mouths of the rivers that flow into Hudson Bay and James Bay the bars are, if anything, more silted than when sailing ships gingerly sounded their way into 'Shiphole' and 'Five Fathom Hole'. At many places in James Bay the available depth is often no more than 9 feet. It was largely because of this draught limitation over the river bars that in 1962 it was decided to use tugs and barges for the transport of freight and supplies in this area. The three tugs, the M.V. *Nelson River*, M.V. *Churchill River* and M.V. *Rupert River* draw only 6 feet as do the barges. The latter are the *H B C 1000*, a 1,000-ton barge, the *H B C 300*, a 300-tonner and two 150-ton craft. Barges are only rarely loaded to more than this 6-foot draught.

Further north, all the ports which the ships call at are tidal except Baker Lake and the ever-present threat of ice is as much part of the navigator's life as when seekers after the Northwest Passage were probing the innumerable inlets, sounds and straits of the coastline of northern Canada. Even in the short northern summer the chartered ship which freights to Chesterfield Inlet and Repulse Bay usually finds Frozen Strait, separating Southampton Island from the Melville Peninsula, blocked by ice. She must then make her way into Foxe Basin, to reach the posts at Hall Beach and Igloolik on the northern end of the Melville Peninsula, by navigating right round the

southern end of Southampton Island. This takes several days longer and every day counts in the short season.

The Company ship, the *Pierre Radisson*, sails as far north as the traditional gateway to the Northwest Passage, Lancaster Sound, to reach distant Arctic Bay on Baffin Island. At 73° North this is the most northerly of the seven posts within the Arctic Circle that are regularly visited by ships either from Montreal or Churchill. Another of the *Pierre Radisson's* calls is at Frobisher Bay, where nearly 400 years ago the Elizabethan explorer who gave the bay his name mistook iron pyrites—fool's gold—for the real thing during his search for the Northwest Passage. The *Pierre Radisson*, starting from Montreal, can make four annual voyages in the season. The chartered ship has another advantage which the founders of Churchill never dreamt of, that of reloading there, since Churchill is a rail terminal. This ship therefore makes her second and third voyages of the season from here and leaves the Bay on her fourth trip before the onset of winter.

From these modern annual freighting voyages one port of call is strikingly absent. York Factory never sees a Company ship or barge nowadays. Its long duty discharged, York Factory sleeps undisturbed except for the visits of hunters and historians, dreaming like an old soldier, perhaps, of ancient battles and glories. One can almost imagine its ancient timbers creaking with relief when, in 1968, J. R. Murray, managing director of the Company, remarked, as he handed over its title deeds to the National Historic Sites Service, 'Although our forefathers would probably be astonished at the absence of either adventure or profit in this exchange, the Company is pleased to surrender this fort without battle, without resistance'. Even that ceremony did not disturb York Fort's rest, for it was conducted at Lower Fort Garry 600 miles away.

No ships now drop anchor off York Fort, but on the other side of the historic Bay the Company flag still flies from the *Pierre Radisson* as it plies its ancient supply role in the harsh and restless waters where, so long ago, countless Company seamen battled with ice and enemies, died of scurvy or went down with their sorely tried ships.

Ships were the midwives that gave Canada birth, the floating stores from which it was equipped with the tools and weapons for the forging of a modern nation and the bulwarks which defended it during its growth to greatness. From the battles, storms and stresses of the past one flag still flies, the Hudson's Bay Company house flag. One Company ship still flies it at sea, and, done with ocean voyaging at last, the Hudson's Bay Company has closed the log of one other, the most famous of all—*Nonsuch*.

When the little replica ketch finds her final haven in the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature in Winnipeg, she will be more than a great trading company's historic gift to a nation. She will symbolize the end of a 300-year chapter in the joint history of both Company and nation and be the monument to countless Company seamen whose bones lie beneath the restless oceans.

Modern Canadian visitors to the ship may like to reflect that on the other side of the Western Ocean, still afloat in the Thames waters whence the first *Nonsuch* sailed in 1668, is another ship which flew the Company flag amid the arctic ice, the *Discovery*. It is fitting that both sides of the Atlantic should have their own mementos of this long and stirring shipping saga. ◆

FRED BRUEMMER

The 'Pierre Radisson' at Pond Inlet, north Baffin Island.

Mistassini Cree

Text by E. S. ROGERS

Drawings by LEE UPDIKE

THE MISTASSINI CREE, who speak a dialect of Algonkian, inhabited and still do the east coast of James Bay inland to the Height of Land. First mentioned in the early 17th century, they were soon visited in their own country by the French who arrived by way of Lake St John. The Mistassini Cree, never numerous, numbered only about two thousand until recently. Today, they have increased to nearly twice that number.

The land of the Mistassini Cree is part of the Circumpolar Boreal Forest, a land of long, cold, snowy winters and short, sometimes quite warm summers. Snowfall is heavy and because of infrequent thaws, the snow accumulates to a depth of several feet. Lakes, ponds, streams and rivers, frozen over for much of the year, abound, interspersed here and there with tracts of muskeg. Forests consist primarily of black spruce but also occurring are white spruce, balsam fir, larch, white birch, poplar, and many shrubs, the most notable being Labrador tea, sheep laurel, willows and alders. Animals—woodland caribou, bear, beaver, recently moose in the southern part of the area, mink, fox, wolverine, marten, fisher, hare, muskrat, wolf, mice and moles—have never been very plentiful. Bird life is abundant only during the summer when many species, such as waterfowl and song birds, have returned from the south. Permanent residents include raven, ptarmigan, snowy owl, spruce grouse, chickadee; but few others. Sturgeon, trout, whitefish, suckers and ling, and minnows, inhabit the lakes and streams. Black flies and mosquitoes abound.

The Mistassini Cree lived by hunting—principally caribou, bear, and beaver—and fishing. Of fish, sturgeon, trout, and whitefish were of most importance and formed a necessary supplement to the diet as did small game taken whenever possible. Along the coast of James Bay, waterfowl were important, although perhaps not at the time of European contact.

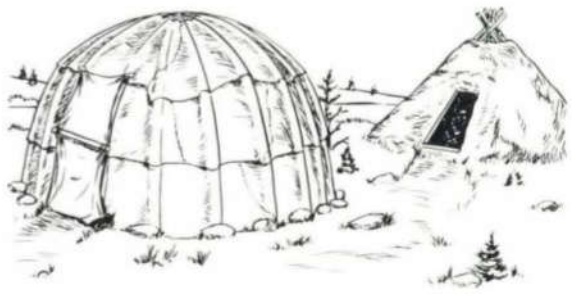
At the time of contact, exploitation was primarily for subsistence. After the arrival of Europeans, the economy was adjusted to meet the demands of the fur trade. The Indians then began to search for the pelts of beaver, otter, mink, marten, and muskrat. Little is known of their way of life before the arrival of European traders.

In order to exploit the varied resources of this harsh environment, the Mistassini Cree had a well defined yearly cycle. As summer drew to a close, the Indians made preparations to leave their summer encampment, located at a trading post. Usually this was a site favourable for fishing and with water communications that gave ready access to coastal depots where the post's trade goods were secured. Good water communication was an important consideration since all goods had to be freighted inland by brigades and the accumulated furs shipped out in a similar fashion during the few weeks of open water.

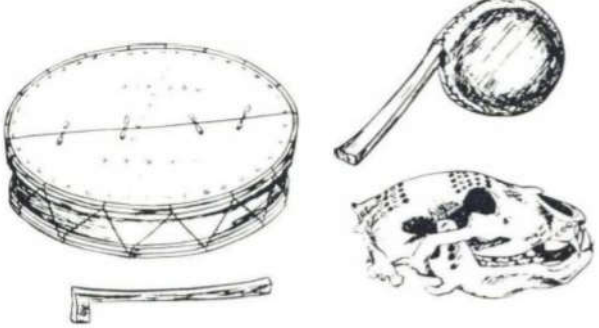
Once preparations for departure were completed, the Indians left the trading post in small hunting groups and travelled by canoe to their hunting territories. Such a group consisted of a leader—usually the eldest man, his family and two or three other families generally closely related.

Their lands were often many miles away and the trip might take more than a month. Formerly, canoes were of birch bark but by the beginning of the present century the Indians had acquired some of canvas. During the trip to their lands, travel was not continuous. They made frequent stops to fish and hunt, necessary pursuits since little food could be secured and preserved during the summer and, until recently, food was limited in quantity at the trading posts.

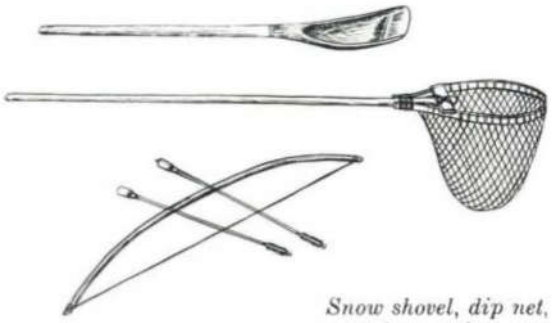
Once the group reached their land, they erected a fall hunting camp. The individual families lived in conical or dome-shaped lodges covered with bark or caribou hides, more recently in canvas tents. Here the people spent a few weeks intensively hunting big game and fishing. They dried and preserved as much meat as possible for the long winter months ahead. The dried meat was wrapped in bales convenient for portaging.



Dome-shaped and conical lodges.



Drum with beater, rattle, and decorated bear skull.

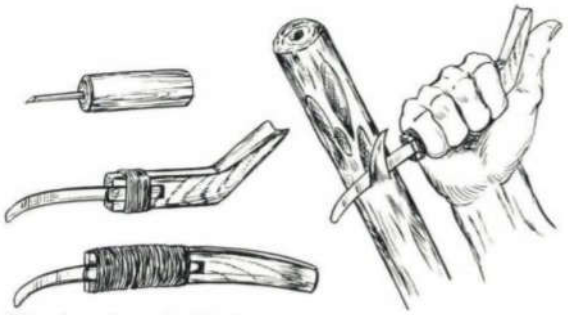


Snow shovel, dip net, bow and arrows

It might happen that at this time a bear was killed, an animal having special religious significance for the Mistassini Cree. When a kill was made, a special feast must be held at which only bear meat and grease were eaten. First, the leader made an offering of some meat and grease to the ancestral spirits. At the end of the feast the men might drum. The bear's skull was saved and later erected in a tree in such a location that it looked out over the water. One of the leg bones would be prepared as a tool for flensing beaver. The other bones were carefully placed on a special bone cache rack. The hide was prepared by the women, the hair being left attached so it might be used as a sleeping mat, but it must not be used for one year out of respect for the slain animal. The chin skin was made into a charm.

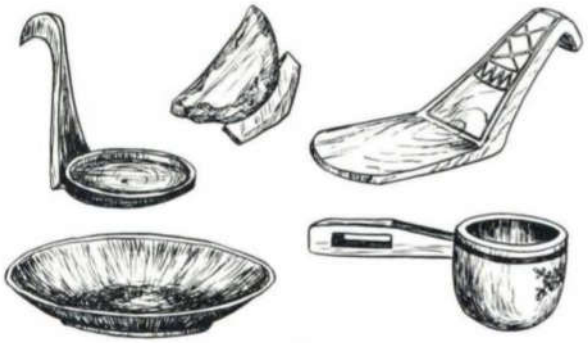
Intensive fall hunting drew to a close as freeze-up approached. At this time, the group abandoned their fall camp and moved to a location suitable for an early winter camp, protected from the intensely cold northwest winds. After the advent of the fur trade, the early winter camp became a more permanent establishment and time was devoted to trapping fur bearers. Formerly, such a long stay—one of several months—would not have been possible since frequent moves had to be made in order to secure food. At that time intensive fall hunting was not undertaken.

At the early winter camp, the several families comprising the group might build a communal lodge—an extra large dome-shaped structure or, near the end of the last century, an earth-covered conical lodge. In addition, they built cache racks and stored their canoes for the winter. They completed all work on the camp by freeze-up. In their spare moments, the men repaired their traps, manufactured swallow-tail snowshoes, toboggans, and snow shovels and put in readiness everything for the trapping season. During this period, a special feast was held at which the men drummed to predict the outcome of the winter.

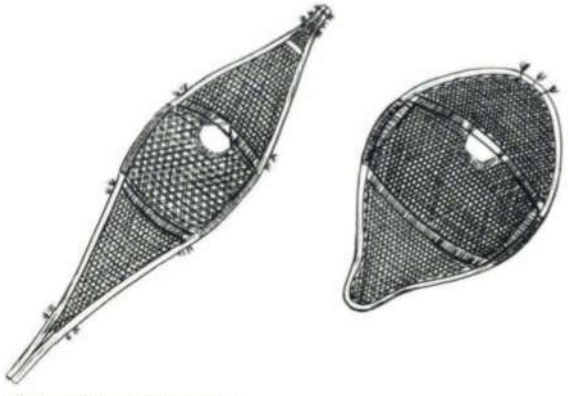


Chisel and crooked knives.

Leg-skin bag, flenser (top), and flesher.



Ladles and semicircular knife, bowl, and cup.



Pointed snowshoe and beaver-tail snowshoe.

After freeze-up the men left to set their traps. Originally, deadfalls and snares were employed but in recent years steel traps have been acquired in sufficient numbers to replace the former types. The men made no special hunting trips but whenever big game was discovered they attempted to kill it.

Women dressed the fur bearers captured. They removed the pelts and prepared them on stretchers. The stretcher was a solid piece of wood for cased pelts such as mink and muskrat and a framework of poles for open pelts such as beaver and bear. After the pelts were scraped and dried, they were tied into bundles ready to be exchanged with the traders for store goods.

About the beginning of the new year, the hunting group ceased intensive trapping. By now the food preserved during the fall hunt had been mostly eaten and the men must begin to hunt again. A feast might be held to mark this point of the year. Then the group deserted the early winter camp and began to move about the territory, living for a few weeks here and a few weeks there. They would make a circuit that, toward spring, brought them back to their early winter camp where their canoes had been left. Hunting and travelling were difficult during mid-winter because of the intense cold, the wind and the few hours of daylight available. Yet these activities must be undertaken if the group was to survive. Travel was by snowshoes, the men wearing the beaver-tail type at this time of year when the snow was light and powdery. Toboggans, drawn by adults—dogs were not used until this century—conveyed the meagre possessions of the people. These consisted of birch-bark boxes, leg-skin bags, wooden dishes, cups and ladles, hide working tools, a small supply of food, wood working tools and, most important, ritual equipment consisting of drums, ceremonial drag lines, and charms.

At this time of year, the conical lodge was the principal habitation. Sometimes when a kill of big game had been made, the men erected a large communal lodge. This had an A-frame at either end, the tops of which were connected by a ridge pole and then poles leaned against the ends and sides. The frame work was covered with birch bark or hides. Meat, it was said, dried better in such a lodge. The women dried the meat and did much of the work in preparing the hides for clothing, containers, and snowshoe lacings. The preparation of a large hide, such as that of caribou, was hard and tedious work taking many weeks of intermittent labour. Hide prepared for clothing and snowshoe lacing first had the hair removed. The men did this work using a special bone beamer. Next, the men removed the subcutaneous tissue with a special flesher having a wooden handle and bone cutting-edge. Afterwards, the women took over. They washed the hide, rubbed it with fat and brains of the animal and stretched it, repeating these actions a number of times. During the process, the hide was frost dried by hanging it in a tree during sub-zero weather for a week or more. For clothing, such as moccasins and mittens, the hide was smoked.

The Mistassini Cree did not use dogs to pull his toboggan in the old days.

Adequate clothing was essential during the winter months of intense cold. Clothing was of hide but little is known as to the styles. Apparently leggings were worn by both sexes and over the body a dress and coat for women and a shirt, breech clout and coat or parka, sometimes with the hair left attached, for the men.

As spring approached, the hunting group made their way back to where they had cached their canoes the previous fall. Not to reach the canoes before break-up could be disastrous since then travel would be almost impossible. Once the canoes were reached, it might be necessary to transport them to a location where open water would first appear. For this they used a canoe-sled, a vehicle also employed at this time of year to transport their possessions. Since the snow thawed during the day, it was heavy and granular. Under these conditions, the men no longer wore beaver-tail snowshoes but reverted to swallow-tails. Pointed snowshoes might also be worn but these were a relatively recent innovation having been acquired by the Mistassini Cree from their western neighbours, the Swampy Cree.

Spring was a time of joy. The weather was warm, vegetation was renewing its growth, animals were moving about more freely, fishing was easier, and birds were returning from the south. Accordingly, a thanksgiving feast was held, the food consisting of muskrats, ducks, geese, loons, and any remaining bear meat and grease. The feast gave thanks to the spirits for watching over and caring for the group during the long winter months and aiding them in their survival.

Once break-up had occurred and the ice had left the lakes and rivers, the group began their trip back to the summer encampment. With food plentiful, they made the trip relatively quickly and easily. By the end of June or early July, all the hunting groups were reunited at the trading post. Now the people could relax and catch up on their neighbours' news. For some there were sad stories to tell of fatal accidents and deaths due to exposure and starvation.

Such a gathering of Mistassini Cree formed a band of as many as one to two hundred individuals. But they did not form a political unit. No strong overall leader or chief existed, this not being necessary since the band remained together for only a few weeks each summer. Political authority remained in the hands of the hunting group leader.

Life for the Mistassini Cree has changed greatly during the past two decades. Few remain who follow the old ways. The youth are becoming involved in the mainstream of Canadian life. Some have moved to the cities to become college students, secretaries, television actors, or have involved themselves in other occupations. With improved medical facilities, the population has expanded and no longer can they find gainful employment in their native land. Many more changes can be expected in their home communities in the years ahead. ◆

Moccasins of several styles were worn.

GEORGE HUNTER

Aerial view of Lower Fort Garry in 1969. The stone fort begun by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1831 as headquarters of the Governor of Rupert's Land, later serving federal and provincial governments, in 1951 was given to Canada and became a National Historic Park.

LOWER FORT GARRY

BY PHILIP GOLDRING

LONG AFTER most of the trading posts of old Rupert's Land have fallen down or been carted away, the most elegant example of Hudson's Bay Company architecture still stands, just twenty miles from downtown Winnipeg. A few miles below St Andrew's Rapids on the Red River, Lower Fort Garry dominates the west bank of the Red as it has done for nearly 140 years. It was once the headquarters of a proud and tireless governor who intended to rule half a continent from within its walls. Now, the fort is one of the few relics of Western Canada's oldest commercial enterprise—the fur trade.

The story of Lower Fort Garry's founding has often been told—how old Fort Garry at the forks of the Red and the Assiniboine was ruined in the flood of 1826, and how George Simpson, acting Governor in Chief of Rupert's Land, dreamt of a new fort on higher ground where he could establish himself with wife and family, and there direct the American business of the Hudson's Bay Company.

To a certain extent Simpson's dreams were fulfilled in the ensuing ten years. He married his cousin Frances in 1830, and the following year work began on his new fort. Suitable limestone was available on the site and Simpson sent Pierre Leblanc, a 50-year-old Canadian craftsman, up from York Factory to supervise the construction. The governor had great faith in Leblanc's abilities, and he received the unusually high salary of £75 a year. First Leblanc built a substantial stone residence, facing the river. Later this 'Big House' was flanked by stone warehouses, each three storeys high, seventy feet long and thirty feet wide. These three buildings are still standing, and despite frequent alterations to the scene, they are still the most impressive buildings in the fort.

Simpson's plans, however, did not proceed as he intended for long. The chief advantages of the new site, as he recited them to the Company's Governor and Committee in London, were its situation below the rapids and its altitude, well above high-water mark in even the

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Mr Goldring is in the Historical Research Section of the National Historic Sites Service. Grateful acknowledgement is made for information gathered by his colleagues D. Miquelon and G. C. Ingram during extensive research in Company Archives, by kind permission of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, and elsewhere, embodied in their reports. The map inside the front cover relates to this article.

worst floods. Compared to old Fort Garry, Simpson's new site was also nearer to Norway House and York Factory, the great depots of the northern fur trade. Besides, Simpson had found it inconvenient to live at Fort Garry, for the Forks were the centre of the bustling and somewhat rowdy Red River Settlement. A governor could not well administer the fur trade of the Northern Department while living in a flurry of petty commercial activity, where 'not a wife can sell her butter nor a farmer his grain without an audience with the Governor', as one clerk wrote. Lower Fort Garry seemed to offer a refuge from all that. Yet despite its advantages, the new fort—Stone Fort, several generations of settlers called it—never lived up to expectations.

George and Frances Simpson failed to find the domestic tranquillity they sought in the Red River Settlement. Both were ill during their year at the Lower Fort, 1832-3, and their first son died there in the spring of 1833. The new site also proved to be impracticable as a centre for the fur trade. Though it was, as Simpson said, nearer Norway House than was old Fort Garry, the Lower Fort was farther from the Assiniboine and Upper Red River communities than the old post had been. The location proved irksome to the farmers and plains hunters who had customarily sold their articles of trade at the Forks; they did not appreciate the extra twenty-mile trek to the Lower Fort, and the Company found itself obliged to keep a saleshop open at the old location. The simple fact was that the Forks were already established as the economic centre of the settlement and not even George Simpson could reverse that arrangement.

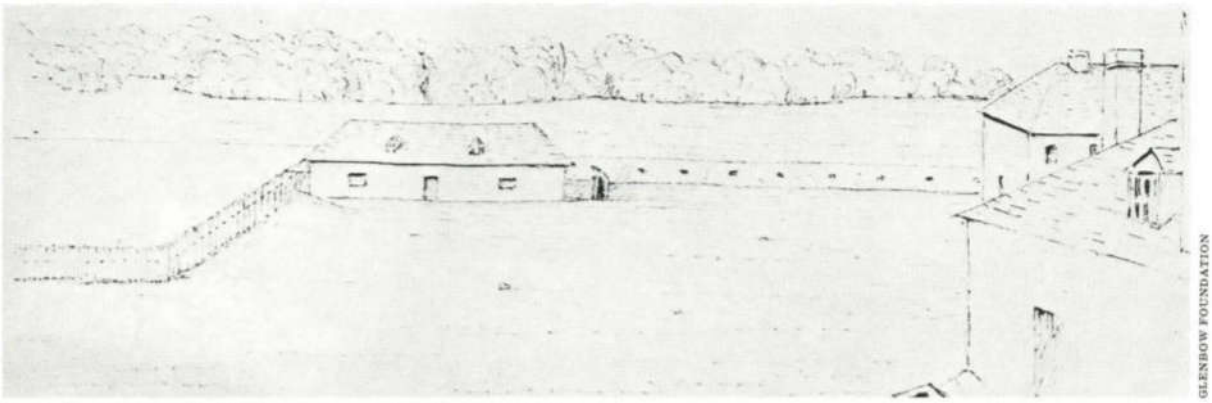
Governor Alexander Christie, who administered the District of Assiniboia (as the settlement was called) after Simpson left in 1833, found it troublesome and a waste of time to make regular journeys between the two forts, conducting the business of the colony at one and that of the fur trade at the other. In 1834 Christie recommended and Simpson agreed that old Fort Garry should be re-established as the administrative centre of the fur trade. Three years later Lower Fort Garry was stripped of its dignity as headquarters, and the Hudson's Bay Company's important business in Rupert's Land was thereafter conducted in a new stone-walled fort at the junction of the Red and the Assiniboine.

Instead of declining, Lower Fort Garry continued to grow. It was relegated to functions of secondary importance, but in the decade which followed the exodus to the Upper Fort, the Company added a number of features to the lower site. These included a cottage, several outbuildings, and a stone wall about eight feet high enclosing four acres of land, with a round bastion at each corner. This continued activity at the Lower Fort was in keeping with Simpson's original plans. Because Lower Fort Garry was below the rapids, it was involved in a considerable amount of water transportation. It also provided a pleasant, attractive retreat where a harassed governor could withdraw in peace to write his letters or prepare a report of the previous year's business. Here, too, the spacious house built for the Simpsons played host to the commissioned officers of the Company as they gathered for the annual Council of the Northern Department. Though these Councils were usually held at Norway House, several were convened at the Stone Fort by Simpson during the 1840s. Various Company officials resided in the Big House or the cottage at this time. Among them was Adam Thom, the controversial young lawyer who had assisted Lord Durham in preparing the latter's famous *Report*. Thom lived in the Big House for seven years in his capacity as Recorder of Rupert's Land, a position which made him both legal adviser to the Company and judge in the settlement's highest court.

Frances Simpson, first chatelaine of the Big House, from a miniature belonging to Mrs M. Porritt, by whose courtesy it is reproduced.

Although the fort was thus used as a retreat or as overflow facilities for officials in the Upper Fort, it had a role of its own to play in the 'lower settlement', the parishes of St Andrew's, St Clement's, and St Peter's. These communities all relied on the saleshop at Lower Fort Garry for their supplies of imported goods and for a market for their excess farm produce. Still, the fort was definitely a minor post in the 1840s, and after Christie left in 1837 it was seldom under charge of a Company servant above the rank of clerk.

Events in 1846 changed the face of Lower Fort Garry considerably. Simpson was worried about the threat to the Company's trade monopoly which was posed by a growing number of Métis 'free traders'; he was also apprehensive lest the United States take advantage of



GLENBOW FOUNDATION

Captain George E. Finlay was at the Fort with the 6th Regiment of Foot when he sketched the incomplete northwest corner, with Big House on right and beyond it the warehouse used for men's quarters. He also drew the soldier in winter dress.

the Oregon Boundary dispute and the half-breeds' turbulence to seize the settlement. The British Government, prompted by the Company's Governor in London, decided to send a force of redcoats to the settlement. On 10 September 1846 about 150 soldiers of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment (6th Regiment of Foot) marched into Lower Fort Garry to begin an occupation which lasted about two years. Colonel John F. Crofton, commander of the expedition, assessed the Lower Fort's military potential shortly after he arrived:

> The walls are . . . not finished, and the Round Bastions at the 4 Angles not completed. The place is however capable of being defended, and as the stores are all stone, I would not fear to hold the Barracks against a strong force unaided by artillery. Before Winter the place can be rendered adequately defensible.

This opinion was never put to a test, for the only enemies Crofton's men encountered were boredom and the prairie winter. The latter was overcome by an ample issue of winter clothing, but boredom took its toll of the men's spirits. Many visitors to the Red River Settlement left glowing accounts of Métis or Scotch half-breed revels and festivities, but Englishmen, and particularly English officers, were inclined to view Red River society with something akin to disgust. Consequently the soldiers had to amuse themselves as best they could, while some followed 'useful' occupations which Crofton devised for them. It might also be noted that the Company's brewer at Lower Fort Garry was never able to meet the troops' demand for his product.

While the military occupation of Lower Fort Garry was an ordeal for the soldiers, it was a great boon for the settlement as a whole. The Hudson's Bay Company had done everything it could to make the soldiers' stay pleasant, and this included purchasing great quantities of foodstuffs from the settlers. (It was at this time that the Company began buying cattle and keeping large herds of them at the Lower Fort to provide a regular supply of beef.) Consequently when the 6th Foot left in August 1848, the economy of the colony stagnated for a time.

During the 1850s the Lower Fort began to wear that air of dignified gentility which George Simpson had wished to impart to it. As the decade opened, the Company sent to the settlement an 'Associate Governor', a son of Deputy Governor Andrew Wedderburn Colvile. Eden Colvile, an energetic young man, had an early career patterned after that of George Simpson: he spent a few years behind desks in London and Montreal, then travelled all over the Hudson's Bay Company's trading area. Eventually he came to rest for a time in the Red River Settlement. He was made 'a Governor of Rupert's Land', and was appointed to the Council of Assiniboia early in 1849. In August of the following year he and his wife were well established in the Big House at Lower Fort Garry. Colvile's role was primarily to act as a substitute for Simpson, who was planning to retire to England.

The black brush of scandal only once tarred an occupant of the Big House. This occurred during Colvile's residence, though the parties involved were not of his immediate entourage. In 1849 a lively controversy had broken out in the colony concerning an illicit relationship between Mrs John Ballenden, wife of the Chief Factor in charge of the district, and Captain Christopher Foss, a

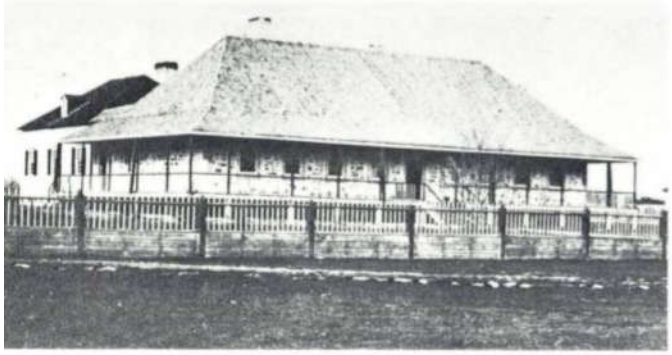
MANITOBA TRAVEL

Today cadets in old-time uniform patrol the Fort grounds. Behind the cannon is a replica wooden retail store building, now containing offices and museum, beyond it the original stone trading store and fur loft.

retired British army officer living in the colony. A suit for libel was pressed against A. E. Pelly, the accountant at Lower Fort Garry, who had helped fan the rumours; Pelly lost the case. When Colvile arrived in 1850 he sent Pelly to the Upper Fort while Ballenden left for England and his wife moved into the Lower Fort. She and Foss continued their affair quite brazenly at Lower Fort Garry. Colvile did his best to ignore the matter discreetly, but Pelly made no effort to hide his glee and Mrs Ballenden soon moved away from the Company establishment. This caused Colvile no trouble, for the public indiscretion of the couple actually helped heal the wounds caused by the court judgment. Pelly's friends were content to see Mrs Ballenden disgraced, while the defenders of that lady's virtue were eager to see the whole matter forgotten.

In that case, as in other, smaller ones, the new governor played the part of a country squire with great natural skill. During his short stay in the colony he closed breaches between different factions in the colony by a genial handling of many petty jealousies. At the same time, he immersed himself in the business of the Northern Department fur trade.

The Big House photographed by H. L. Hime in 1858, the first building erected on the site in 1831.



PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

Colvile's stay also brought about a marked change in the fort itself. The walls and bastions had been completed in 1846-7 to their present form; Colvile set the men about the post to work at improving the landscape within the walls. The results were impressive. Bishop Anderson, the Anglican bishop of Rupert's Land who had occupied the Big House himself briefly in 1849, remarked three years later that 'the Fort has been improved with much taste by the Governor and Mrs Colvile and it began to wear much more of an English aspect; the annuals were above ground and the lawns smooth and green'. Colvile also ordered many alterations to be made to the Big House, giving it the air of solid respectability shown in the 1858 photograph by Humphrey Hime.

Colvile, like Simpson before him, did not stay long at the Lower Fort. At the end of 1852 he and his wife returned to England, leaving the fort once more in a state of quiet seclusion, broken only occasionally by the arrival or departure of boat brigades and by the routine business of the saleshop. But the whole pattern of the fort's first twenty-five years' history was soon shattered, as the Red River Settlement entered a decade of rapid development which ushered the region into the Canadian confederation.

Lower Fort Garry became a lively place in the 1860s. One of its residents during these years, Mrs A. T. Cowley, daughter of Chief Trader William Flett who was in

B. A. JOHNSTONE

Back of the Big House and annex in 1962, when it was occupied by the Motor Country Club.

charge of the Fort between 1868 and 1882, described some of her memories for *The Beaver* (September 1934):

> The business in a way was conducted on military lines. At six a.m. when the fort bell rang, everyone started out to their several occupations; at seven-thirty the bell rang and everyone went to breakfast. (Mr. Flett made his round of inspection between six and seven-thirty a.m.) The bell was again sounded at eight-thirty and every-one returned to work. One o'clock the dinner bell rang; two o'clock work again. At five o'clock Mr. Flett again made his rounds. At six o'clock the bell rang and everything was closed for the day.

Spare time was scarce. Only one hour was taken off Saturday's schedule, and there were only three holidays during the year other than Sundays. These were Good Friday, Christmas, and New Year's. There was one day of unofficial holiday: the men seldom were able to report for work the day after New Year's.

This rigorous schedule at times involved a dozen regular Company servants, plus day labourers. The Lower Fort's placid rural charm was regularly violated by the constant coming and going of skiffs, York boats, schooners and steamboats or, in winter, sleds, carrioles and dog-trains. Packets and cargo vessels were frequently exchanged between Lower Fort Garry and nearby posts including Upper Fort Garry and Fort Alexander; there was also regular communication with Grand Rapids and Norway House. Hundreds of cattle grazed in the Company's large reserve west of the fort, and the area to the north was filled with barns, stables and sties. As a final assault on the tranquillity which so appealed to Simpson and Colvile, an industrial complex grew up which included a saw mill and a steam whistle. Lower Fort Garry was at its heyday.

The first great increase in activity at the Stone Fort began in 1857, with the rapid expansion of agricultural activities at the post. During the 1850s, Lower Fort Garry had emerged with a strong role as the southern depot for provisioning the fur trade. (The Upper Fort, meanwhile, became the centre for administration and distribution of trade goods.) Supplies of pemmican, dried fish, ground flour and baked hard-tack biscuits were all prepared or collected at the Lower Fort for shipment to Norway House. There they would be used to feed the travelling brigades of boatmen on the long water route between Portage la Loche (now in northern Alberta) and York Factory on Hudson Bay. (The clerk in charge of Lower Fort Garry was also responsible every December for recruiting about eighty tripmen to man the York boats of the Portage la Loche brigade.) The settlement proved a fickle supplier of food, so by 1857 Simpson was determined that the Company should to a great extent provision itself. Lower Fort Garry was put under the charge of Alexander Lillie, an apprentice clerk with considerable experience as a farmer in his native Fife-

shire. Lillie broke ground on the west side of the fort in 1858 and developed a farming operation which soon extended over more than a hundred acres, excluding pasturage. During the 1860s, the project grew to considerable dimensions including extensive fields of wheat, oats, barley, pease, turnips, potatoes, and a variety of garden crops, as well as a large herd of beef cattle. Several tons of meat were prepared annually for shipment north, amounting in 1868 to five thousand pounds of pork and ten thousand of beef, slaughtered and dressed from the Lower Fort's stock alone.

The settlers resented the farm. Their unscientific and lackadaisical methods of farming had led the Company to establish the agricultural complex at the Lower Fort in the first place, out of frustration and economic necessity. Still, some grumbled that they had been deprived of a necessary market for their excess produce. The settlement's anti-Company newspaper, the *Nor'Wester*, complained in 1861 that

> times are not very promising just now for the Red River Farmer . . . It is to be remembered, too, that the Hudson's Bay Company now raise a great deal of grain, and keep a very large stock of cattle for their own use . . . and although they still purchase a considerable quantity yearly, their own immense farm at Lower Fort Garry renders them in a great measure independent—so far independent, at least, as to dictate their own terms in purchasing.

As the editorialist conceded, the Company still bought a great deal of country produce—its purchase of beef in 1868, for example, was twice as great as the year's supply from its own herd. Besides, 1861 was 'not very promising' for the Company's own farms, either. Lower Fort Garry was not immune to the various disasters of drought and locusts which struck the settlement in the sixties. Furthermore, the farm was not a financial success. In his last year as governor, Simpson had invested in modern farm machinery from Britain and the United States, but because of the farm's reliance on day labourers, it was expensive to operate. The Company soon gave tangible proof that its interest had been in improving supplies, not in stifling the settlers' activity: after 1870, when the province of Manitoba experienced a general agricultural revival, farming activities at the fort declined rapidly.

A herd of several hundred oxen was attached to the Lower Fort Garry farm, but belonged to an entirely different aspect of the Company's operations. During the late fifties the transportation route from York Factory up to Red River strained and collapsed under the impossible load it was expected to carry. After 1858 it was gradually replaced by a route involving Canadian and American railways to St Paul, Minnesota, and Red River carts and steam boats from St Paul to Upper Fort Garry. This system was gradually extended until by the early sixties the Saskatchewan and Swan River districts were also supplied through St Paul. Because the Red was an unreliable river for steam navigation, and because there were no steamboats on the Saskatchewan, large numbers of Red River carts were required to link the efficient

CHRIS GRANT

March 1970, after the restoration of the Big House to its original aspect had been completed.

WILLIAM G. DAVIES FOR HBC

First units of the North West Mounted Police were quartered and trained in Lower Fort Garry from October 1873 until the following summer.

sections of the new system to the erratic facilities of the hinterland. These carts were small, squeaky two-wheeled vehicles, made without a scrap of iron and each drawn by a single ox. Consequently, hundreds of oxen were required to transport each year's outfit. Because of Lower Fort Garry's unique position on good grazing land relatively near a reliable labour force and quite close to the Forks, most of the Company's oxen were herded near the Stone Fort or at its satellite stations, Oak Point on Lake Manitoba and Netley Creek, near Lake Winnipeg.

Every large exodus of carts from Upper Fort Garry was preceded by a movement of oxen a day or two previously from the Lower Fort. These transportation arrangements were cumbersome but were infinitely preferable to reliance on the York route. An added advantage was that surplus 'equipment' could readily be transformed into beef, a commodity which was always in demand in Rupert's Land.

Despite constant problems with low water, the Company put its faith in the St Paul and Red River route, and Lower Fort Garry became increasingly involved in maintenance work connected with water transport. Since the 1840s, York boats had regularly been made at the Stone Fort, and in 1865 a schooner, the *Polly*, was built there to ply Lake Winnipeg. About 1863 an Engineer, E. R. Abell, took up permanent residence in the cottage at Lower Fort Garry, and thereafter it was customary for the steamboats—the *Pioneer* and the *International*—to be outfitted and repaired at the Lower Fort. They also usually wintered there or at a nearby shelter, 'Joe Cook's Creek'. The fort's active involvement in the transportation revolution reached a peak in 1872, when the screw steamer *Chief Commissioner* was built and launched from an impromptu shipyard below the fort. The *Chief Commissioner* was not entirely a success: she was built for the shallow waters of the Saskatchewan, but was unable to cross Grand Rapids from Lake Winnipeg to Cedar Lake. Unsuited for the rough waters of the lake, the *Chief Commissioner* was used sparingly and within a few years she was dismantled. She later suffered the indignity of acting as a floating dock for her successor, the *Colvile*.

In other respects Lower Fort Garry became an important centre both for the Company's activities and for the settlers. The industrial revolution reached Assiniboia late in the 1850s, and by 1865 signs of its arrival were evident at the Lower Fort. The most impressive was a steam engine, mounted over the creek between two other buildings. The first of these was a grist mill, which ground wheat almost year-round for the settlers as well as the Company. The other building, located south of the creek, was a saw mill. The machinery was so arranged that it could operate either of the mills, sometimes changing from one to another in the course of a day's work. However, the two mills could apparently not be worked simultaneously. A power lathe was added to the industrial complex in 1869. Other facilities included two lime kilns and a large blacksmith shop, both of which met the Company's needs for the entire Red River district and had time left over to do small jobs for the settlers. A bake-house, located in the northwest bastion, was operated every winter to provide hardtack for the provision depot at Norway House, and for local needs.

All these activities declined after Confederation. Like the farm, the industrial complex was designed primarily to overcome the general lack of adequate facilities in the

settlement, and the rapid growth of Winnipeg after 1870 made the Lower Fort redundant. By the late 1880s Lower Fort Garry was destined to be, in commercial and logistical terms, useless to the fur trade. When the barns and industrial buildings were taken down in 1884, a dynamic young city straddled the site of Upper Fort Garry and a growing town—Selkirk—was a railway terminus serving a farming district north of the Stone Fort which had been a wilderness twenty years before. Lower Fort Garry itself was sandwiched between the Red River and a branch rail line. No longer were there York boats and schooners plying between Stone Fort and Norway House—the few bales of furs and small quantities of country produce which collected in the old warehouses were shipped south to Winnipeg. The province of Manitoba made Lower Fort Garry obsolete.

Unlike its counterpart at the Forks, Lower Fort Garry was spared any major involvement in the creation of Manitoba, being hardly more than a spectator to the events which followed the Canadian government's arbitrary attempt to govern Rupert's Land by direct orders from Ottawa. However, the Lower Fort was strategically located: the Métis were strongest around the Forks and south and west of the Upper Fort; Portage la Prairie at the extreme western edge of settlement was strongly in favour of annexation to Canada under terms which would keep the government in Canadian hands. To the north of Upper Fort Garry, the lower settlement was populated mainly by Indian and 'Scottish' settlers and halfbreeds, who trusted neither set of extremists. The opinion of this neutral region, Riel and the Canadians both realized, could determine the fortunes of the Métis resistance movement.

The first move came at the Upper Fort, which Riel occupied on 3 November 1869. A month later Colonel John Stoughton Dennis, the Canadian Government surveyor whose assignment had triggered the troubles, rallied a force of settlers and others loyal to the Canadian cause at the Stone Fort. William Flett, the officer in charge at the post, recorded in his journal that Dennis 'took possession of this place in the name of the Queen and Dominion Government, and read the Queen's proclamation. [He] intends to make it his headquarters.' The proclamation, as it happened, was not the Queen's at all. The Canadian government had held up its purchase of the Northwest, and Dennis's proclamation was issued under illegal instructions from the hapless Lieutenant-Governor designate McDougall, who was himself prevented by the Métis from crossing the 49th parallel.

From the Lower Fort, Dennis instructed the 'loyal' Canadians at Winnipeg to disperse, in order to avoid capture. Instead of separating, they gathered with their weapons in the house of 'Doctor' Schultz, leader of the rabidly anti-Company, anti-Métis faction. There Riel surrounded them, threatening the house with cannon, and they were led off in ignominy to imprisonment in Upper Fort Garry. At the same time Dennis found the lower settlement neutral, abandoned his recruiting efforts, and left his 'headquarters' on December 10th. If McDougall was to recruit loyal troops to his standard it would not be at Lower Fort Garry.

Uneasy relations between the Métis and residents of the lower settlement continued to dominate the political manoeuvres of Riel and the Canadian government's newly-arrived representatives, Abbé Thibault, Colonel de Salaberry, and the Commissioner Donald Smith. On a few occasions they visited the Lower Fort, but only as part of their tour through the settlement in search of allies for a moderate program of annexation to Canada with limited self-government for the territory.

One hostile force did venture against the Lower Fort, but the episode was almost farcical. Schultz escaped from the Upper Fort early in 1870 and Riel made it no secret that he hoped to capture and shoot the fugitive. About the middle of February a rumour circulated that the Canadian leader was hiding at the Stone Fort, and Riel and sixty men paid a midnight visit to the establishment. Flett wisely decided to accommodate his uninvited guests, so they searched the fort at will. The only noticeable excitement occurred when Riel strode into a bedroom of the Big House and threw the covers off a bed. There he discovered not John Schultz but a sleeping clergyman; the experience 'frightened the Archdeacon nearly out of his wits'. Thereafter Riel left the Stone Fort unmolested, and in April he concluded an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company which permitted the business of the district, as much as possible, to proceed according to habit. At no time did the Lower Fort, or the English and Indian settlers who surrounded it, assume a leading role in the drama of the Métis resistance.

The crisis which brought Assiniboia into Confederation touched Lower Fort Garry only once more. Late in August 1870 some British regular troops and nearly 800 Canadian volunteer forces arrived in the settlement under Colonel Garnet Wolseley. This expedition, which was sent to underline Canada's sovereignty over the North-

The H B C steamer 'Colvile' above the Fort, 1877, alongside the floating dock that is the hull of the 'Chief Commissioner' built at the Lower Fort in 1872. The engineer's cottage, extreme right, still stands.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA

west and to prevent further Métis resistance, came by way of Lake Superior and the tortuous Winnipeg River, across Lake Winnipeg and then up the Red. The commander and an advance party arrived at Lower Fort Garry August 23rd, breakfasted there, then pressed on to the Forks. There they found the Upper Fort abandoned, Riel's breakfast still on a table and papers littering the rooms. It was an ignominious end to a movement which created a province, but Wolseley's appearance signified a return to stability which had been sorely missed for nearly a year.

The bulk of the troops were stationed at the Forks, but, by accident or design, the French-Canadian unit* was barracked in the Stone Fort, in the heart of the English-speaking district. There they remained, about 380 all ranks, until they were withdrawn late in April 1871. Their stay at the Lower Fort must have been very dull, for they left little by way of documents behind them except statistical returns and requests for promotions.

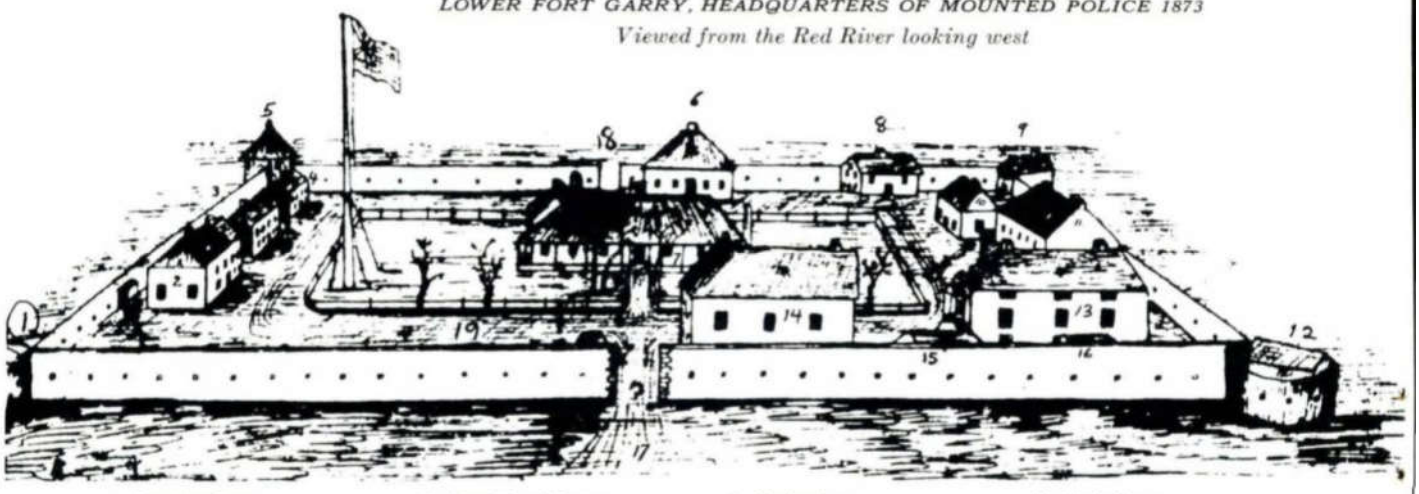
With the Red River Settlement preparing for a different sort of existence from what it had known, Lower Fort Garry began to develop new roles to replace its declining importance in the fur trade. Manitoba in 1870 was a province only in name. Her population—less than 15,000—was smaller than that of Halifax, Hamilton, or half a dozen other Canadian cities of the time. There had never been an elected legislature, a public school system, or a public building of any sort. Yet the tiny town of Winnipeg, with its several dozen houses and shops, had to become a provincial capital and the administrative centre for the North-West Territories. The town did experience phenomenal growth in the years after 1870, but at first the Hudson's Bay Company was called upon to provide various institutional and government buildings, just as it had before 1869. Upper Fort Garry remained an administrative centre for some years, as the lieutenant-governor took up residence there. At the Lower Fort, both the provincial and federal governments took advantage of facilities which were unique in the province—a collection of fine stone buildings, somewhat isolated from the mainstream of the settlement but near sources of food and main transportation routes. The Company's business at Lower Fort Garry continued throughout the period 1870-85, but the fur traders and shop-keepers frequently found themselves sharing the fort with rather unusual guests.

In April 1871 the federal troops left the Lower Fort and the provincial government moved in. Several buildings on the north side were fenced off behind a high palisade, and what was once Mrs Colvile's genteel country manor echoed with the beat of convicts breaking rocks. The old stone warehouse and the grounds around it were leased to the Manitoba government for one thousand dollars a year; the lease continued for four years, then was taken over by the federal government until February 1877. The warden in charge throughout this penitentiary period was Samuel Lawrence Bedson, a former British soldier who was proud of his own background and equally proud that his guards, or 'turnkeys' as they were then called, were mostly ex-soldiers too. Though the fort was hardly designed to meet his purposes, Bedson imposed upon it a strict prison discipline and was quite successful in imitating larger penal institutions.

Considering the changes made in Canadian correctional institutions in the intervening century, there is a certain grim irony in some of Bedson's orders. 'During this severe cold weather and until further orders,' he announced one January, 'prisoners will not be encumbered with wearing

*This was the Second Battalion, Quebec Rifles. Although the government had intended to recruit equal numbers of French- and English-Canadians for the expeditionary force, to emphasize the national nature of Canada's acquisition of the North-west, about three-quarters of the Quebec Battalion were of other than French-Canadian extraction.

LOWER FORT GARRY, HEADQUARTERS OF MOUNTED POLICE 1873
Viewed from the Red River looking west



1 Provision Store
2 Hudson's Bay Store
3 Barracks B. Division
4 Meat Store
5 Oil Store
6 Hospital and Canteen
7 Officers' Quarters
8 Dwelling House
9 Bakers
10 Carpenter Shop
11 Penitentiary
12 Magazine
13 Barracks A and C Divisions
14 Guard Room
15 Cook Houses
16 Rear
17 Front Gate
18 Back Gate
19 Parade Ground

The original stone warehouse, in 1858, which later served as a penitentiary and then as a lunatic asylum, and a cell photographed during archaeological examination in 1968.

ball and chain when chopping wood and drawing water.' All turnkeys and wardens were to salute the warden whenever he approached them, and dining-room etiquette was stringent:

> When a convict is deprived of his supper, it will be laid by Steward as usual, and after all convicts sit down to table such *supper* will be removed from such convict. . . .
> Turnkeys bringing in convicts from work will march them to their places at the different tables and when in positions they will give the command, 'Sit', when they will all be seated to their individual meals.

There was also a humane side to the penitentiary as it developed under Bedson's supervision. Most of the prisoners had been sentenced to short terms for relatively minor offences, and they were usually kept busy in a variety of more or less interesting jobs. Breaking rock was the exception rather than the rule at Lower Fort Garry. Convicts were usually employed repairing buildings, looking after the extensive prison garden, tending cattle, or working in the profitable prison shoe-making shop, which was started by an imprisoned cobbler who did not wish to let his skills go to waste. Bedson encouraged all these activities and started classes for Indians and other inmates who were unable to read or write.

Escapes were rare, and none of the careful rifle training which Bedson gave his subordinates was ever required. The prison, all things considered, reached a high standard of organization and by 1877, when Bedson moved the penitentiary to its present site at Stony Mountain, he had established as best he could with limited facilities an institution where one might hope, in his own words, to 'endeavour to reform the unfortunate ones whose lot it is to be held in custody'.

Even before taking over the prison, the Dominion government did not ignore the Stone Fort. In August 1871, Lieutenant-Governor Archibald and a Dominion Indian Commissioner, Wemyss Simpson, met at Lower Fort Garry with about a thousand Cree and Ojibway Indians to draft and ratify the Dominion's first Indian Treaty. The natives ceded all of what was then the province of Manitoba; the Dominion inaugurated the system of annuity payments and reservations on which subsequent Indian treaties were founded.

Two years after this treaty was signed, federal officials returned to the Stone Fort for another colourful and historic episode. Between October 1873 and June of the following year, the first units of the North West Mounted Police were received, sworn in, and trained at Lower Fort Garry. Recruits were quartered in an old pemmican warehouse in the northeast corner of the fort; a one-storey building, still standing at the west gate, was taken over as a canteen and hospital. Acting Commissioner Lieutenant Colonel W. Osborne Smith sequestered the Company's new store as soon as it was erected, and used it as an auxiliary barracks. Only the officers were disappointed in their accommodations; they were lodged in the attic of the Big House, which was divided only by 'wooden partitions which do not reach the ceiling'.

The Mounted Police made their first patrol—against illegal whisky traders on Lake Manitoba—from the Stone Fort in December 1873. The expedition was a success—six men and ten gallons of liquor were taken. The former were led back to the settlement, the latter seizure was destroyed. But the force did not stay long at the scene of its first triumph. On June 7th, the Mounted Police rode out of Lower Fort Garry on the first step towards their legendary rendezvous with American whisky-traders at Fort Whoop-Up, in what is now southern Alberta.

After the federal government moved its penitentiary out of the Lower Fort in 1877, it found no further use for the old fur trade post until 1951. Not so the provincial government. It was back in 1885 with the most unlikely collection of tenants the fort had ever hosted: three dozen lunatics. Such people were previously kept in the Manitoba Penitentiary, but Bedson had protested against this practice as early as 1875. In 1884, therefore, the province began building a modern brick asylum in Selkirk. The contractor experienced several difficulties and the opening date of the new institution was postponed for so long that hasty preparations were made at the Lower Fort to receive the mental patients from Stony Mountain. On February 14th, 1885, Lower Fort Garry became by the Lieutenant-Governor's proclamation, 'the Lunatic Asylum for the Province of Manitoba . . . for the

H. B. CHIPMAN

The Governor General is entertained at the Lower Fort in 1904. Seated, centre, in front of the Big House, is the Countess of Minto, with Lord Minto on her left and Commissioner Chipman on her right.

reception of lunatics, idiots, and persons of unsound mind'.

The main buildings used by the asylum were the former penitentiary, which became the men's ward, the former Mounted Police canteen and hospital, where the women were quartered, and a small wooden building between the two, which served as an administrative centre. The whole was surrounded by a high stockade erected, as H B C Trade Commissioner Joseph Wrigley wrote, to

> prevent the possibility of any of the inmates of the Asylum getting into the other parts of the enclosure of the Fort, and of any annoyance to people visiting the Company's store or to the Company's servants inhabiting the Fort.

In fact one patient did slip into the fort and threatened a customer in the store with an axe; such 'visits' however, were rare in the part of the fort retained by the Company, and on the several occasions when patients did leave the asylum unobserved, they usually did not remain long in the neighbourhood.

The asylum, like the penitentiary fourteen years earlier, was a pioneer effort in the province. The first superintendent was David Young, M.D., a young doctor from Ontario who had lived in Manitoba since 1871. Young had probably never tended lunatics except when he was medical officer at the penitentiary, but he had an experienced assistant in the matron, Miss McBride, who had held a similar post in London, Ontario. The bursar, a matron's assistant, and several male attendants completed the staff of the new asylum.

Various of Young's contemporaries, including Bedson and Senator Schultz, held a low opinion of the Superintendent's qualities, but there seems to be little evidence to support the charges. Young appears to have been a dedicated and competent man who usually spent seven days a week caring for his patients; he continued as Superintendent until 1912. The relatively high number of escapes from the asylum at Lower Fort Garry (about one each month) may be attributed to the inadequacy of walls and stockades. Although Young permitted the patients on many occasions to go outside the walls for walks in the fields or for a drive to Selkirk, only one of these excursions resulted in an escape. Nor was the atmosphere inside the asylum particularly harsh: Young's usual method of disciplining a difficult patient was to talk gently with him. If this failed, which frequently it did not, the more troublesome inmates were given strong sedatives. Young had neither strait-jackets nor any other form of restraining device.

At last, early in 1886, Young and all his entourage moved to the new asylum at Selkirk. Lower Fort Garry was left once more with the air of rural tranquillity which had always been its most appealing feature.

Despite the government institutions which invaded the Stone Fort, the atmosphere grew steadily more subdued as the Company's activities in Manitoba changed. The farm faded out during the seventies; one by one, the industrial projects folded. The blacksmith shop was wrecked on Victoria Day, 1877, when an amateur pyrotechnic show went awry: the resulting explosion demolished the forge and killed several people. About 1882, the head of navigation on the Red River was moved to Old Colvile Landing, near Selkirk, so Company steamers no longer came to the Lower Fort which was, indeed, the only H B C fort on the Red by then. The remaining structures of the fort were dismantled until, by 1900, nothing was left except the engineer's cottage and the few buildings which still stand inside the walls.

While the Lower Fort's heartbeat slowed, the old buildings began to meet their founder's intentions. Gradually Lower Fort Garry became an oasis of gracious living in the expanding settlement. A reorganization of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1871 created the post of Chief Commissioner in place of the former Governor of Rupert's Land. The commissioners continued to make their headquarters in Winnipeg, but for forty years, holders of the office spent at least part of their time at Lower Fort Garry. The trend started when Donald Smith (afterwards Lord Strathcona) spent the winter of 1871-2 in the Big House, and in 1879 Commissioner James A. Grahame moved his entire family into the fort for the summer. During Grahame's years as Commissioner, an official residence was built in Winnipeg, but he and his successors found it uncomfortable, and the Stone Fort remained an important summer retreat. This was especially true after 1891, when a 35-year-old Nova Scotian, Clarence C. Chipman, was appointed to the Company's highest office in Canada. Chipman apparently shared his predecessors' views of the house in Winnipeg, and he had several growing children. So he spent every summer for twenty-one years at Lower Fort Garry. As long as he continued to return there annually, the saleshop remained open year-round and the clerk in charge continued to occupy the annex of the Big House.

During these years the Stone Fort saw a whirl of social activity, and Mrs Chipman's guest book reflected the Canadian social register of the time. Sir Charles Tupper spent a few days at the fort, as did Lord Strathcona, Sir Sandford Fleming, and Sir William Van Horne. In addition, three provincial lieutenant-governors and many other local dignitaries were among Chipman's guests. The literary world was represented by the Rev. Charles Gordon ('Ralph Connor'), William Henry Drummond, and Ernest Seton Thompson.

The occasional fur trader would still pass through Lower Fort Garry en route between Winnipeg and the North, but such visitors were scarce. Much more interest surrounded the arrivals of three governors-general of Canada. The first was the Marquis of Dufferin, who spent a night in the Big House in 1877. Two vice-regal parties passed through during Chipman's residence; the first was the entourage of Lord Minto, who visited in 1904; he was followed a few years later by Earl Grey. The fort also hosted frequent garden parties, attended by the best of Manitoba and Canadian society. George Simpson would have relished this high society.

All this ended abruptly in 1911. Chipman left and moved to England; John Stanger, who had operated the saleshop since 1893, closed the till for the last time. For two years the fort stood deserted; there was very little use, it seemed, for an 80-year-old trading post in twentieth-century Manitoba. Then the old fort reasserted its charm: in 1913, the newly-formed Motor Country Club of Winnipeg took a long-term, low-rent lease on Lower Fort Garry. The old elegance returned.

There were changes, of course. Automobile engines purred where oxen used to plod, and flowers bloomed in the penitentiary yard. The old Indian camping-ground south of the creek became a nine-hole golf course; a bar appeared in the basement of the Big House. One thing remained the same: the new occupants revived the social calendar of the Chipmans. Eminent Manitobans presided over gay outdoor parties, and governors-general passed through. What struck observers most, however, was the great improvement in appearance and household facilities. Hamilton Chipman, the former Trade Commissioner's son, remarked in 1956 that 'bathtubs and rain barrels have been replaced by showers and hot and cold running water. Kerosene lamps and the wood stove are now relics of the past. The old order has changed, and for the better.'

But one aspect of the old order was not abandoned. The Hudson's Bay Company kept a close eye on Lower Fort Garry, and ensured that it remained in good repair. In 1951 the Company passed this job on to other hands: title to the ancient property was given to the Dominion. For eleven years, the Motor Country Club shared the site with the Historic Sites Division of the National Parks Branch. The club continued its activities, but the buildings which were not reserved for members were open to the public.

During the mid-1950s the Historic Sites Division began to prepare the fort for more extensive development as a National Historic Park. Rotting floors were replaced, crumbling masonry was rebuilt, and studies were conducted on the feasibility of restoring the surviving buildings to their previous condition. Finally, in 1962, the Motor Country Club surrendered its lease and government officials prepared to develop the site as one of the major historical attractions of Western Canada.

The first step in restoring the old fort was to replace the wooden store, built in 1873 and torn down about 1925. The exterior of this building is a precise model of the original; the interior serves as an administrative and

NHS

Dining room of the Big House as restored in 1969.

historical centre for the Park, while the top storey houses a museum of Western Canadian Indian artifacts.

While this restoration was in progress, a massive historical research program began, concentrating mainly on the manuscript collections of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. In the intervening years, reports have been prepared on virtually all the major buildings of the fort, and on the agricultural and industrial activities connected with the post during the past 140 years.

Extensive restoration of the site has already begun. In 1969 the Big House was fully completed to reflect the period of Eden Colvile's residence. In mid-July 1970 four more structures are scheduled to be ready for public view. The first is the southwest bastion, the only two-storey covered bastion in the fort, where the two military occupations of the fort (1846-8 and 1870-1) will be depicted. The northeast bastion with its red-roofed powder magazine will be opened, as will a Red River frame house outside the walls. The latter is restored as a typical settler's home of the 1830s.

NHSS

The major piece of restoration scheduled for completion this year is the original fur loft and saleshop building. This, one of the three oldest buildings in the enclosure, will provide an accurate representation of the Company's retail trade activities during the 1860s on the first two floors. The third storey, the old fur loft, will show the processing of furs—weighing, baling, and marking for shipment to York Factory—as it was conducted a century ago. In its long-range plans, the National Historic Sites Service intends to restore the majority of the buildings on the Park site which had a role in the fort's history.

So Lower Fort Garry has made a full circle from Simpson's original plans. It was intended at first as the focal point of the northwestern fur trade. Instead, it played an auxiliary role to Upper Fort Garry, then retired gracefully as a quiet scene for dignified summer festivities. But the Lower Fort has at last attained some degree of pre-eminence. Many other fur trade posts have fallen out of sight, their last traces buried by the plough. Upper Fort Garry was sacrificed to an urban planner's passion for perfectly straight streets. Lower Fort Garry, on the other hand, was saved by its isolation from extensive commerce and settlement—that very characteristic which originally defied Simpson's grandiose schemes. Saved by its faults, the Stone Fort has come into its own as the foremost centre for the historical presentation of Western Canada's fur trading past. ◆

Back of the Big House during restoration of the solid stone 1831 structure and the annex (built 1840) which is of 'colombage pierrotee'—timber frame filled with rubble masonry, revealed during reconstruction in 1968, as shown above.

GEORGE SIMPSON

CANOE EXECUTIVE

By K. C. Tessendorf

An impression of the Governor by a free-lance writer in Washington, D.C.

James Douglas greets Governor Simpson at Fort St James in New Caledonia where he arrived on horseback.

FROM PAINTING BY A. SHERRIFF SCOTT FOR HBC

'*ALERTE!*' The resonant shout reverberates through darkened forests of pine and fir, echoes across moon-dappled waters, somewhere, almost anywhere, in the Hudson's Bay Company's northern continental preserve of 150 years ago. It's 2 or 3 a.m.—a modern swinger's bedtime—still, with indecent stridency the call resumes: '*Léve, léve, léve!*' Is this some unforeseen wilderness emergency? No, it's the sprightly beginning of a business day for George Simpson, Governor-in-Chief in Rupert's Land 1826-60, and canoe executive extraordinary.

Many a contemporary Chairman of the Board is proud to own a plaque or embossed certificate issued by a grateful airline testifying to his achievement of 100,000 or more air miles in the service of his company. Such records are being currently compiled at speeds of 600 miles per hour; speeds soon to be doubled. Pliant foam-rubber comfort surrounds the peripatetic executive, as well as the graceful attentions of a chic hostess serving gourmet libations.

Not so with Sir George; his was the rough company of voyageurs, and an average of five to six miles an hour in canoe brigades was the best he could hector out of his men. Yet in a few decades of incessant travel, he covered scores of thousands of miles on Company affairs. Some of the mileage was spectacular—five trans-continental pioneering probes to the Pacific shore, and an unusual trip around the world. There were also twelve transatlantic round-trips to London headquarters. However, most of the travel, the essential travel, of this early 'consecutive executive' was via birch-bark canoe across vast dominions included in Company operations; from Montreal to Lake Winnipeg and beyond, from Norway House to the out-posts of Athabasca, from Hudson Bay to the Columbia.

He set a gruelling pace:

I was now to learn how Sir George travelled. He had a picked crew of Iroquois canoemen from Caughanawaga, above Montreal, than whom there are no better in the world. They were dressed in red shirts and trousers of rough serge, with red L'Assompcion belts wrapped about their waists. Sir George and his secretary slept until seven o'clock that first morning, the crew paddling silently and steadily, except when Sir George, still apparently asleep, raised his arm and slipped his fingers in the water. The steersman no sooner noticed this than he put added force into his stroke, the others followed suit, and the canoe fairly leaped ahead.

At seven to the minute we put ashore for breakfast. In half an hour, whether the meal was finished or not, we re-embarked and proceeded on our course. The Iroquois enlivened the journey with their old French-Canadian boat songs while Sir George dictated to his secretary.

At noon we put ashore for an hour by the watch, then went on until after sunset and camped for the night. Each member of crew knew his work and did it expeditiously and well. Tents were pitched, supper was cooked and eaten, and everyone sought his blankets.

Indeed, the Company could not have functioned without the voyageur, Indian or French-Canadian, who somehow thrived on an 18-hour work day. By the paddle-blades of these Canadiens—triangular-chested, cord-necked prodigies—was carried forth the riches of an empire. A contemporary observer (Dr John Bigsby) has memorably depicted this rough-and-ready crew:

Some were well made, but all looked weak in the legs, and were of light weight. . . . The collection of faces among them chanced to be extraordinary, as they squatted, paddle in hand, in two rows, each on his slender bag of necessaries . . . One man's face . . . seemed to have been squeezed in a vice, or to have passed through a flattening machine. It was like a cheese-cutter—all edge. Another had one nostril bitten off. He proved the buffoon of the party. He had the extraordinary faculty of untying the strings of his face, as it were, at pleasure, when his features fell into confusion—into a crazed chaos almost frightful; . . . A third man had his features wrenched to the right—exceedingly little, it is true; but the effect was remarkable. He had been slapped on the face by a grisly bear.

Sir George Simpson, from a portrait by Stephen Pearce. HBC COLLN

Sir George believed in the worth of the old-time salesman's proverb: 'Ya gotta know the territory.' Simpson put it more sedately: 'The most trifling information is useful at times and can only be acquired by a personal survey of the country.' He believed in other old sayings too—'time is money' and 'clothes make the man'. So equipped he passed between outlying Company posts and palisaded district headquarters. An Englishman who travelled with him, Frederick Graham, wrote:

> I hate the sight of these forts. Strange, large tumbledown places, like lumber-rooms on a vast scale. All the white men living in them, look as if they had been buried for a century or two, and dug up again, and had scarcely yet got their eyes open, for they look frightened when they see a stranger.

Especially when the stranger was Governor Simpson, for he cut a wide swath through the deadwood of established custom and place. He admonished, he hired and fired on the spot. He overawed the provincial factors who had far more seasoning than he, with the affectation of intellectual superiority, bolstered by style in clothing and bearing. Some posts were summarily closed, others brusquely relocated. For the governor was the pure verity of the 'Company Man', and his thumb-screw economies were the delight of London. In his first years as top man in North America he cut the payroll by more than half, and reduced the wages of those remaining by half! This ex-clerk of anonymous birth, plucked off a high stool in London, knew there was a world to win in North America, and was disinterested in popularity polls on the way to seizing it.

With a silken but ruthless touch he bound together the best elements of the Hudson's Bay and North West companies, stripping out the expendables, and settling former antagonists in a hard but permanent marriage of convenience. He filled with incisive comment a 'Character Book' maintained while on his travels, sizing up the stupid, the industrious, the compliant, and the rebellious. Incipient rivals among the factors were noted and eased out to the Company's periphery, while the subservient were rewarded by loyal though parsimonious attention. He drew the factors into annual councils where he ingested the year's gossip, and shrewdly examined his colleagues for signs of local empire-building. These assemblages were then expected to rubber-stamp policies of Simpson's own making.

Sir George perfected the art of executive travel. It was his 'big stick'; invisible but threatening. Even at his frenzied best the Governor could not cover half of the territory in a season, but the question was always which, and when? Winters soon ceased to be a haven within a thousand miles of Norway House, for Simpson mastered snowshoes within a year. And where he did not choose to penetrate personally, the traders had an indefatigable and cannily all-seeing correspondent to contend with. He induced a sentiment of foreboding in the northern continent. 'The wicked flee when none pursueth.' Opposition of his subordinates became benumbed and through most of his tenure Sir George was the 'Little Emperor' in fact as well as legend.

Governor Simpson shrewdly promoted travel's facet of imagery, majesty of presence and office. Though often engaged in true exploration of the heartland of the North American wilderness, he preferred the top-hatted attire of a London banker. He made the most of outdoor pomp and circumstance. Here is Simpson's approach to Norway House on his epic journey from Hudson Bay to Fort Langley and the Columbia River in 1828, described by Chief Trader Archibald McDonald who accompanied him most of the way in a second canoe:

> As we waft along under easy sail, the men with a clean change and mounting new feathers, the Highland bagpipes in the Governor's canoe, was echoed by the bugle in mine; then these were laid aside on nearer approach to port, to give free scope to the vocal organs of about eighteen Canadians to chant one of those voyageur airs peculiar to them, and always so perfectly rendered.

Cause had its reverent effect. Young Malcolm McLeod clutched the hand of his father, Chief Trader John McLeod, 'a sturdy Highlander, snuff box in hand, and with countenance beaming in conscious pride of his work [the new Norway House] well done', as they awaited the arrival of the *Kitche Okema*:

> On the signal hill of rock, from a tall Norway Pine shaft, floated the 'grand old Flag'. From the 'hollow rocks'—the world of rocks—all around us, awoke the wild echoes, by 'the bugle', 'set flying'. Then the grand thunder—skirrl of 'the bag pipes', with their 'Campbell's are coming, hourray! hourray!' or some such 'music of our mountain land', loud droned out to the very vault of heaven. And then—as a *cadenza* of soothing, gladdening, exquisite charm—the deep and soft and so joyously toned voices of those full throated

voyageurs, timed with a stroke—so quick—of glittering paddle blade, singing with such heart their '*La Claire Fontaine*', or some such loved air of *their* native land—*our own land*, let us say.

. . . when the Governor's canoe, with its grand high prow, rounded, and brightly painted, flashed out of the dark rock 'at the point' into our full view, and gracefully turned into the little 'port' at our feet, the heart seemed to swell with admiration and delight at the sight. Never; never, had anything so grand and splendid, and delightful withal, been seen in those primitive wilds!

The perceptive Simpson utilized his travels as an outlet for action and example. He investigated trails and river routes and advocated the use of freight boats for the Athabasca trade. He personified the will to seek out new trading routes by personally, in circumstances of hardship and danger, several times piercing the Rockies even on foot.

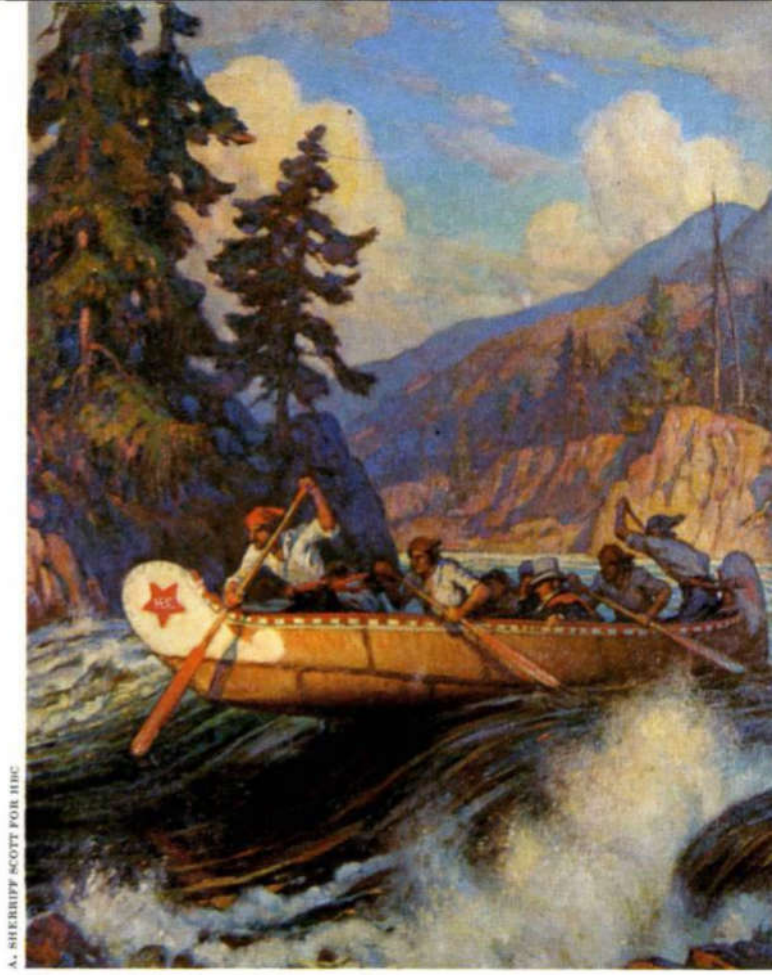
Governor Simpson was a diminutive five-foot-six, but he was no paragon of elegant refinement. On occasion he berated, flogged, or wielded a canoe pole against the unfortunate voyageur who incurred his wrath. He would leap into an icy stream to save his party at a critical moment, and no club-room functionary would have made the first descent of the violent rapids of the Thompson River in conditions that 'whitened countenances of the boldest among us, even that of our dark Iroquois Bowsman who is nearly amphibious,' and continued down the Fraser which he considered afterwards 'to be certain Death, in nine attempts out of Ten'.

The Governor's strenuous efforts on behalf of Company and Queen earned him nobility in 1841 when he was knighted, and set him up as semi-official observer for the Crown on an unusual round-the-world journey via present day Canada, California, Hawaii, Alaska, and across dreariest Siberia. He gained the confidence of the Hawaiian Royal Family, and treated adroitly with the Russian-American Fur Company, squeezing out American trading influence for a time. It was in Alaska, in fact, that the high-tension Scot was wound down for once:

While at Sitka, I took a bath, which might be a very good thing for those that liked it. On entering the building, I was much oppressed with the steam and heat, while an ill-looking, long-legged, stark-naked fellow was waiting to officiate, as master of the ceremonies. Having undressed in an antechamber, so far as decency would permit, I made my way into the bathroom, which was heated almost to suffocation. Having thus got me into his power, the gaunt attendant threw some water on the iron furnace, while, to avoid, as far as possible, the clouds of steam that were thus raised, I squatted myself down on the floor, perspiring profusely at every pore. I next seated myself on a bench, while bucket after bucket of hot water was thrown on my head; and then, making me stretch myself out, my tormentor soaped me all over, from head to foot, rubbing and lathering me with a handful of pine-tops.

Once more taking his bucket, the horrid operator kept drenching me, the successive pailfuls descending gradually from nearly a boiling heat to the temperature of fifty degrees. The whole process occupied about an hour. I then returned to the antechamber, where, after being dried with hot towels, I was very glad to put on dry clothes. It was impossible, however, to make my escape immediately, for I was so relaxed as to be obliged to recline on a sofa for a quarter of an hour; and then I withdrew, inwardly resolved never again to undergo such another castigation.

An ex-Company man's revenge, no doubt!



A. SHERRIFF SCOTT FOR HBC

Descent of the Fraser River on the journey in 1828 from Hudson Bay to Fort Langley on the Pacific.

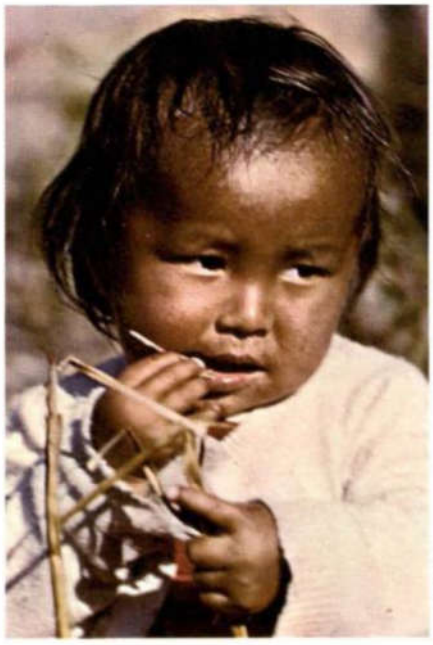
Simpson could be very affable when it suited Company interest. He revived the North Westers' old Beaver Club in Montreal for a time, probably as a source of loose-tongued intelligence. The beverage record of the final celebration was 46 bottles of Madeira and port, 14 of porter, 8 of cider; for 32 diners.

He was a passionate traveller, though not in the guidebook sense. His journals do not show much notice or appreciation of landscape or scenery; they are preoccupied with schedule or delay, the logistics of movement. However he was proud to have been the first man to make a round-trip from the Bay to the western ocean in a single season; and the familiar oil portrait of Sir George Simpson shows the edge of a library stuffed with travel volumes, including his own. It is unremarkable that he was travelling when terminal illness struck in his 74th year—his 40th in Company service—or that ten days before his death he had staged a grand reception for the visiting Prince of Wales.

It has been 110 years since the peripatetic Governor last moved on the face of the waters. Today Man stands on the verge of colonization of the planets, another far-flung enterprise. We may be sure the spirit of Sir George Simpson will be riding with the Outward Bound.•

H. DOYE

Coppermine River near Bloody Falls.



EGON BORK

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

There is a fine ring to the title Northwest Territories, and when this political division was created one hundred years ago from Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory, it comprised the greater part of Canada. Since then provinces reached up to touch the 60th parallel and beyond, and the Yukon became an entity, but there is still more than a third of Canada, with a capital at Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories of this year's centenary.

Living in the Territory are the descendants of the original Indians and Eskimos and immigrants who adopted the country as their own and who preserved it, perhaps not consciously, but because the interrelation of man and nature was basic to their continued existence. They were hunters and seafarers, artists and housewives whose tasks were very different from their counterpart in the south. Today they are joined by many others whose eyes turn to the North, some to make quick visits, to study, to exploit and develop, some to create a homeland; doctors and builders, prospectors and airmen.

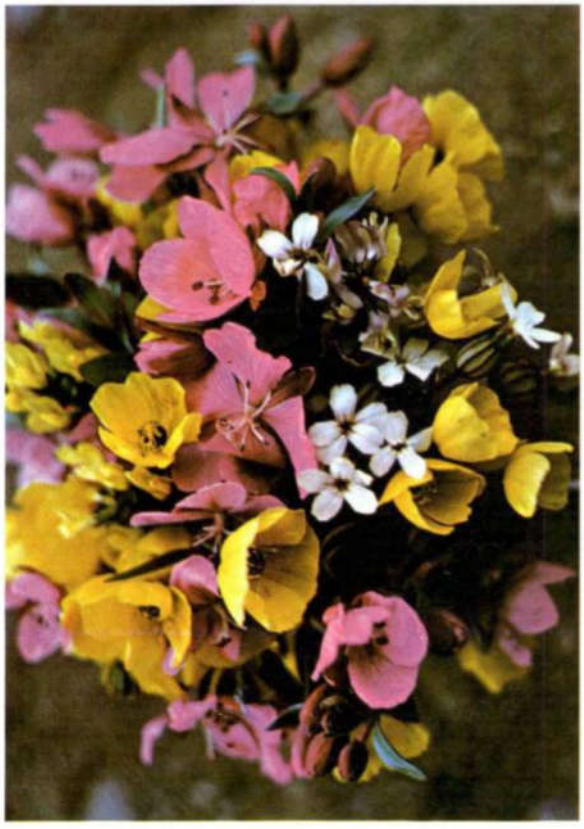
It is a country of great variety, from icy islands to tumbling waterfalls, from caribou range and soapstone quarries, to muskrat marshes and meandering rivers, from open tundra to boreal forest. It is the land of long days in summer and long, long nights in winter.

Only a few facets are depicted in the portfolio on these pages.

J. R. MACDONALD

Unloading ship at Broughton Island

Arctic poppy, willow herb, bladder campion.

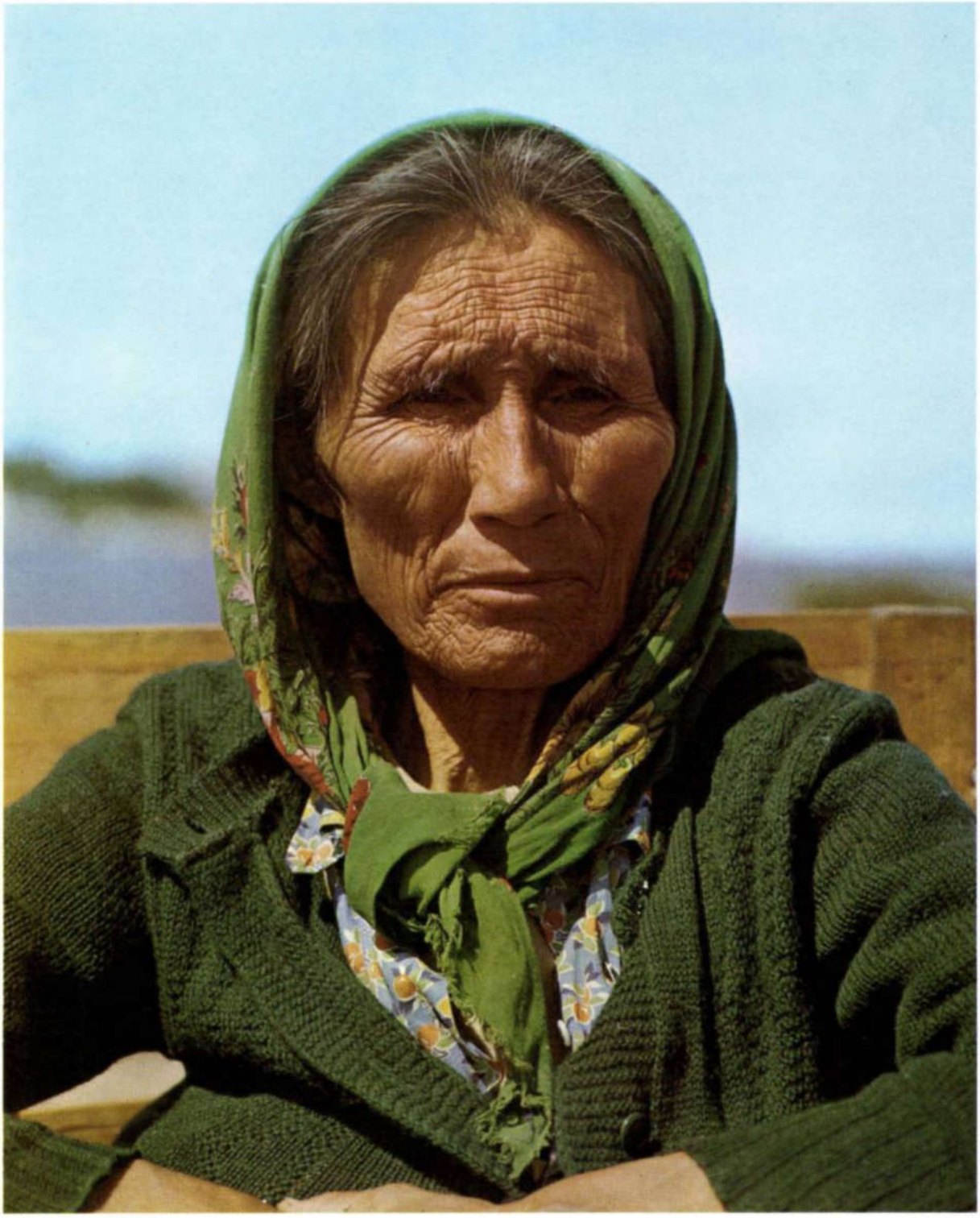


ROSEMARY GILLIAT

Caribou fawn and reindeer moss.

FRED BRUEMMER

LORENE SQUIRE



Hay River woman.

EGON HORK

EGON BORK

Louise Falls, Hay River.

Bathurst Inlet couple.

J. OOTES

Camp near Fort Liard. ↑

Sealskins, Pangnirtung. ↓

E. J. SPRACKLIN

NWT GOVT

NWT GOVT

Yellowknife.

DEPT OF ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES

Tundra camp.

NWT GOVT

J. OOTES

NWT GOVT

W. A. TODD

NWT GOVT

The Governor General tours the Territories.

Kenojuak with her Medal of Service of the Order of Canada.

Eastern Arctic camp school.

Girls Guides celebrate N.W.T. centennial.

Old store, now a warehouse, Aklavik.

RONALD HAWKINS

Reflections on the North

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

In 1936, Stephen Leacock, the McGill professor of economics and political science who was more widely known for his humorous writings, did a little reflecting on the North for the December issue of *The Beaver*. In recognition of the recent celebration of the 100th anniversary of his birth we reprint his reflections. These point up the changes that have come about in three decades and sound a warning about despoliation that is as timely as today.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY D'EGVILLE

I am well aware that the North 'teems everywhere with animal life'.

SOME YEARS AGO I was engaged in Montreal in what is called 'historical research', a thing done by professors in the heart of the summer in the depth of a library where there is no one to check up their time. Often it takes years and years to write a chapter.

But the point is that I wanted to make a reference to the foundation of the Hudson's Bay Company over two and a half centuries ago, and I wanted to be certain of their official name. The companies of those days had queer names, all alike and yet all different—'gentlemen' of this and' adventurers' of that, or 'merchants' of the other. I couldn't remember whether the Hudson's Bay Company were called gentlemen, or adventurers, or business men, or captains of industry, or crooks. I looked into a lot of old volumes and got no wiser. Then a sudden idea came to me: 'I'll telephone them!' It had occurred to my mind that the Hudson's Bay Company of Charles the Second were still right there down town in Montreal and doing business. So I called the number and asked, 'Would you mind telling me the full official name of your company?' 'Certainly. We're often asked for it. We're the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay.'

It seems wonderful, doesn't it? I almost imagined myself going a little further and saying, 'Hullo, Prince Rupert, can I speak with your cousin Mr Charles the Second?' 'Hold the line a minute and I'll see. I'm sorry, our Mr Charles is in conference with our Miss Nell Gwynne, and we don't like to disturb him.'

* * *

The thoughts aroused by such an incident characterize the size and majesty of the Great North; the fascinating

sweep of time and space that its name involves; the North, where man scribbles in vain a little history and Nature buries it in a blizzard of snow.

The North is the only place where Nature still can claim to rule, the only place as yet but little vexed by man. All over the globe there spread his noisy failures; the North alone is silent and in peace. Give man time and he will spoil that too; but the time has not, thank Heaven, as yet arrived. The fascists, we read, are mowing down the reds, or the yellows, or whatever they are, in Barcelona with machine guns. But the Eskimos of Ungava are not troubling the Algonquins. Someone is dropping bombs all round Gibraltar, but none fall on the delta of the Mackenzie. The organization of the air defence of London hums as loud as the mosquitoes of the Great Slave Lake, but all is quiet on the Coppermine. The Poles are so worked up about their corridor to the sea that there may be a first class war about it; but the Indians are using the same old portage route from the Moose to the Albany, and going right across the railway track, and no one worries about it.

Compared with the rest of a troubled world, the North seems a vast realm of peace.

* * *

No great war, no war on a real scale, ever devastated the great northwest. But listen to this forgotten—or rather unknown—episode of history. That arch-disturber of mankind, Napoleon Bonaparte, once tried to make such a war, once planned to strike at England by means of a great sweep to be made from the snow-covered plains and mountains of the West. This was to take the Canadas and the settlements of the seaboard from the rear. Students of military science like myself (I like it best when it's about a hundred and fifty years old) do not need to be told that a crack in the rear is about the most deadly thing that one general can administer to the other. That is why a great commander like Marlborough or Napoleon was always careful to have his rear resting on something reliable—like a marsh, or broken rock or a field of cactus. And that was why a great mind like that of Napoleon would turn to grandiose schemes of hitting, not merely another general in the rear, but a whole nation. Napoleon went to Egypt, not to kill the Egyptians—that was just done on the side—but with a view to getting at the rear of Turkey, and he planned the still vaster enterprise of throwing India on the rear of Europe. But for the defeat of Tippoo Sahib at Seringapatam this might have been done. Readers who don't know about this 'rear' business often wonder how people like Tippoo Sahib and Genghis Khan get into our history. That's it—by the rear entrance.

Well, at any rate Napoleon's plan was to organize the vast tribes of the Northwest—presumably the Crees and the Doukhobors and the Albertans—to overwhelm Ottawa and Montreal. His idea was correct in a way and came true later on, but it was premature. It was characteristic of Napoleon's profound ignorance of America, to imagine the Northwest filled with likely looking Indians who could be recruited into Kellerman's dragoons and Milhaud's cuirassiers and descend (in four or five days) from the Rocky Mountains on Montreal with cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!'

So Napoleon set out to get information. All that could be found out in Paris (the year was about 1805) was that a man called Mackenzie had been right across the continent to the Pacific Ocean and had written a book about it, published in 1801 under the title *Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Laurence, through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans; in the Years 1789 and 1793*—which, for a Scotchman, was short and snappy. Napoleon ordered the book translated in French and printed. Only two or three copies were made, beautifully bound and embellished. There is no trace of any of them left except of the copy given to General Bernadotte, afterwards, by Napoleon's influence, made Crown Prince of Sweden, and great-grandfather to the present King. Napoleon wrote to Bernadotte about the scheme, and hence our knowledge of it. The information gathered showed its emptiness—at the time—but later on the notion of a descent from Alberta to take Ottawa in the rear has been worked out with success.

When I write about the North I speak with a certain authority. For I know the North, as few people know it. In the corporeal, bodily sense, I have never been there. But in my arm chair, in front of the fire in my house on Côte des Neiges Road in Montreal, I have traversed it all, from the portages back of Lake Superior to where the Mackenzie delta washes into the tidal seas. I have been with Franklin on the Coppermine and Coronation Gulf,

A crack in the rear is about the most deadly thing that one general can administer to the other

with Hudson till I lost him owing to his own folly, with Mackenzie over the divide, in Red River ox-carts with Butler, and in the foothills with Milton and Cheadle. In the snow-storms and arctic blizzards I feel perfectly at home; if it gets really bad I just lie down in the snow, along with Stefansson, and let it bury me completely and lie there for a day or two and read a book till it moderates. But I must say I don't think I ever felt such intense cold as on crossing the Coppermine running hard with ice through barren treeless country of slate and stone. Imagine trusting oneself on a river like that on a sort of raft or boat made of willow sticks, wet to the skin, in piercing cold. I had to get up and mix a hot whisky and stir the fire and leave Franklin and Richardson to freeze awhile till I rejoined them. A fine story that, *The Journey to the Polar Sea*, by John Franklin: not the narrative of his immortal adventure and heroic death, but the earlier journey down the Mackenzie and along the polar shores with Richardson and young Back. There is a very human little incident in the tale of how Lieutenant Back, youthful and ardent, nearly got left out of the expedition —stayed behind to go to a dance. They sailed without him and he caught them at the Orkneys or somewhere. Back returned to the North, as an explorer, and descended the Back river that commemorates his name. Later he became a knight and an admiral.

Let no one think, from what was said above, of the silence and peace of the North, I am trying to depict it as a vast frozen emptiness. Far be it from me to fall into that worn-out fallacy of the lifelessness of the North. If I ever shared it, I was cured of it long ago by an angry letter I once received from Vilhjalmur Stefansson, an angry letter that proved the beginning of a personal friendship of over twenty years. I had written a little book called *The Adventures of the Far North* and had spoken in it of the North as 'Here in this vast territory civilization has no part and life no place. Life struggles northward only to die out in the Arctic cold'.

Stefansson, who takes a personal pride in the North and regards Baffin Bay as a superior social centre to Naragansett Beach, felt affronted and wrote, in substance: 'You may be a h—— of a humorist, but what you don't know about the North would fill a book. Don't you understand that the North is full of flowers and butterflies and life everywhere?' I answered back mildly: 'I meant further north still. The thing must stop somewhere.' But I learnt the lesson, and I know now that it is just a poet's fancy to speak of the Great North as 'silent and untenanted'. I am well aware, without being told again by Tyrrell or Stefansson, or anyone touchy about it, that the north 'teems everywhere with animal and plant life'. I read the other day a rather spiteful account, by an English settler, of the mosquitoes on the shores of the Great Slave lake that made me quite envious. I happen to be the president of the Anti-Mosquito Society of East Simcoe, one of the few active offices that I still retain in retirement. What with coal oil and such things, we have killed off so many mosquitoes that we are beginning to run out of them and may have to send for more. It is good to know that if a real shortage comes the Great Slave lake district can supply an adequate 'carryover'.

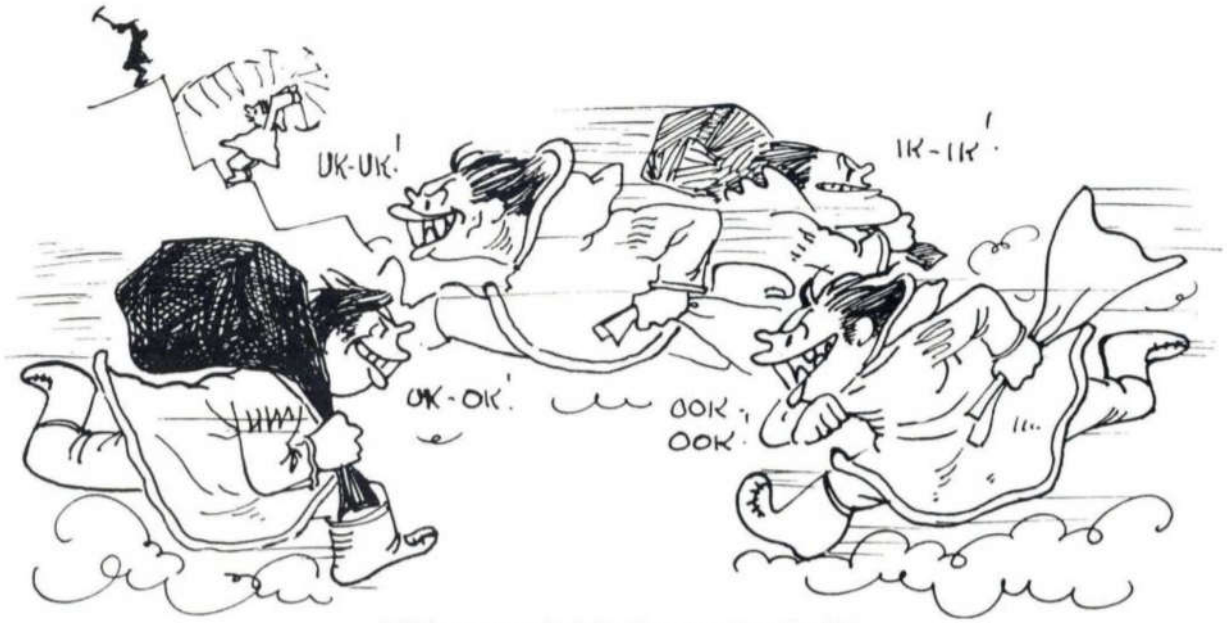
But if the North, even at its emptiest, still waves with arctic flowers and hums with a mist of insects, there is a sense in which it contrasts with all other parts of the globe. The role of man and nature, as seen elsewhere, are reversed. The elemental forces still rule; and over it falls, inevitable and eternal, the winter night.

Vilhjalmur Stefansson is not the only one of the great explorers of our time whom I have been privileged to know. I recall a wonderful evening in my house at Montreal, listening to Roald Amundsen, just back from his discovery of the South Pole. The eminence of that exploit makes it part of the history of the world, and makes people lose from sight Amundsen's earlier achievement: his accomplishment, in the little *Gjoa*, of the northwest passage, which gives him a place in the heroic annals of Canada. Amunsden, when I met him, was lecturing—a job which he hated as much as all good lecturers do—in order to get enough money to make another polar voyage, anywhere so long as it was polar. I was to be chairman of his meeting, and so I called upon him after breakfast with a list of social invitations—things he abominated. I said, 'Captain Amundsen, the Ladies' Morning Musical would like to invite you as their guest this morning.' 'Thank you,' he said, 'but I would rather not.' I went on to the next item. 'Sir William Peterson would like to know if you would care to come up at ten o'clock and see McGill University?' 'Thank you; I would rather not see it.' 'The Woman's Canadian Club are holding a lunch and would like you to come as a guest of honour.' 'That is very kind, but I would rather not.' 'The Ski Club want to give a tea.' 'No, thank you.' 'The Norski, Danski, and Svenski Associations would like to escort you with torches from the hotel to the hall.' 'It is very kind, but no, I would rather take a cab.'

'Now,' I said, 'we come to the last item. After your lecture is over, will you come up to my house and have some Scotch whisky?' 'Yes, very gladly, indeed; that is most kind.' And at my house that night Amundsen talked till the small hours of his South Pole experience, talking chiefly with Jack McCrae of Flanders Fields, who was also a polar explorer of sorts, having just made a trip through the Hudson Strait.

I also knew Captain Bernier, our own Canadian explorer, who saw more of our arctic seas than any other living man. I met him at a big dinner in New York, where he was the chief guest. He had some moving pictures—very new and very imperfect things then—of polar scenes. Bernier apologized for them. 'I 'ave to hapologize,' he said, 'for the pictures. We didn't know ver' well how to take them. This one is call' "Heskimo Loading Coal"!'

Load it they certainly did! The picture had been taken with a wrong timing; the Eskimos dashed in one hop a



'This one is call, "Heskimo Loading Coal"!'

hundred yards from the ship to a great cliff of coal; their picks moved so fast you could not see the points; they filled bags of coal in four seconds; and were back on the ship in one hop. Next to me at the banquet sat an American coal man. 'Gee,' he said, 'I wish I had those fellers at thirty cents an hour!'

Ernest Shackleton I knew also, and well. It is not generally known, for it has never been made history, that after the war Shackleton planned a Canadian polar expedition to explore the Beaufort Sea. He had wanted to go south again, but the British admiralty were very half-hearted about giving him support. So he turned to Canada, and came to Montreal to raise money. I was one of those who tried to help in this, and, with the government's and private generosity, we soon had plenty of money in sight for the expedition. Exploration is as cheap as human life itself. I arranged on behalf of Shackleton for the services of a corps of young McGill scientists. Then he asked me if I would like to go as historiographer, and I said yes. I knew McGill would spare me. Any college would send its staff to the Beaufort Sea any time. I said I needed no pay, and so for twenty-four hours I was historiographer of the Beaufort Sea Canadian Expedition.

But it came to a sudden end. I said to Shackleton that I would supply all my own Scotch whisky for the year's trip, as I didn't want to be a charge on the ship. And he said they didn't take whisky on polar expeditions and, outside of the medicine chest, didn't allow it. Another illusion of the North shattered! I always thought that explorers, the ship once well set in the ice and buried in snow, went down below with a pack of cards and a keg of whisky. But it seems not. They take observations. I resigned, and a little later news came that the admiralty had gone right about face and Shackleton was given a ship, and he went south and never came back.

But all of this that I have said of the North is supposed to move groping towards a general idea, to throw a dim light upon a general conclusion. Here is this vast, beautiful space—the last part of human heritage to be reached and explored by man. Not much longer can it remain in isolation. Its infinite distance is gone. It thrills with the waves and currents of talking voices: over it hovers the searching aeroplane. Mankind that filled the empty savannahs of the West is moving on the North. Human life and human livelihood have learnt easily to adapt themselves where once was hyperborean darkness.

We, speaking collectively for all mankind, have for the present at least made a mess of the rest of the world. Our contriving wits and calculating selfishness have somehow cheated us of what seemed our inheritance. Man struggles in the grasp of his own machinery.

For the North let us make it different. If the vast lands that edge the polar seas—Scandinavia, Russia, Canada—are to be filled with electric light that dims the aurora, with power that defies the cold, and resources that supply the world, let us see to it that in the new trust of the future of the North we make fewer errors than in the old.◆

An experience related to

A. DUDLEY COPLAND

by

E. J. GALL

Destination of the 'Emma Jane': the H B C post on King William Island as it was in September, 1925.

WRECK OF THE 'EMMA JANE'

E. J. Gall, later member of the NWT Council and A. Dudley Copland, later armed forces northern adviser, both began their careers in the North in the H B C Fur Trade Department in the twenties. When former fur traders reminisce, experiences like the incident related below are brought to mind.

AT CAMBRIDGE BAY in 1927, Ernest 'Scotty' Gall took charge of the *Emma Jane*, a forty-two foot, two-masted schooner with an eight horse-power auxiliary engine. She had been bought from former traders in the Western Arctic and towed to Victoria Island. There, four H B C vessels were sorting out and transferring cargoes prior to setting up new arctic posts.

It was proposed that Scotty Gall with the *Emma Jane* should investigate the most favourable passages through Queen Maud Gulf because of the vessel's shallow draught. Then she would continue east with freight for a post on King William Island. Her cargo consisted of eight tons of coal, one case each of potatoes, oranges, eggs, and bacon, along with ten bales of deerskins and several bundles of sinew for sewing.

The crew of the *Emma Jane* consisted of Scotty Gall as Master, a young Scottish sailor named J. Christie, Netsilik Eskimo Ovilook and his wife Caniyuk, four persons in all. There were also six dogs, a sled, and several bundles of dried fish for dogfood. From what little information was available, it appeared that the voyage from Perry River to King William Island should take three days. The *Emma Jane* departed on September 16; the equinoctial gales were due to commence any day, although the weather for the past two weeks had been exceptionally good.

Due to contrary winds and with little or no help from the labouring engine, the vessel barely made five knots. She managed to clear the maze of islands by evening and entered the open waters of Queen Maud Gulf. Scotty Gall

had intended to pass the night hove-to under sail until daybreak, but seeing shoals in every direction, he decided to spend the night off one of the coastal islands.

The wind was freshening from the northwest and it was quite dark when the *Emma Jane* got under the lee of a small island. The anchor had to be dropped well inshore because of the shortness of chain. Everything seemed fine, except that there was a considerable back swell, which can be expected around any small island if there is a sea running. Near midnight, after a lull, the wind rose from the southwest and it was soon blowing hard, driving the *Emma Jane* shoreward because of the poor holding ground of small boulders. Soon she was hard aground with the keel grinding into the beach. If the wind continued in this direction it would not be long before the vessel suffered serious damage.

It was decided to haul the anchor home with a small hand winch, then to splice a length of two-inch manilla rope to the short anchor chain. When this was done the anchor was placed aboard the sponson canoe with the intention of dropping it farther out in deeper water. Then the *Emma Jane* could be kedged to a better-holding anchorage.

Ovilook accompanied Scotty Gall in the canoe. When they reached the end of the cable the anchor was dropped overboard, but in so doing, Ovilook tipped the canoe. Scotty Gall surfaced in the cold water and grabbed the canoe but soon realised that Ovilook, unable to swim, was floundering away from the canoe. Grabbing him by the hair Scotty Gall struck out for the *Emma Jane* which he reached in an exhausted condition, and suffering from severe cramps. Christie and Caniyuk pulled them both on board. But the precious canoe was gone.

After spending an hour in sleeping bags to restore circulation, work began on kedging the *Emma Jane* out to a safe anchorage. She was still in a precarious situation, and before dawn the anchorage was again moved farther out. When daylight came the wind changed and the *Emma Jane* now lay parallel with the beach, with her stern pointing to a long reef that ran out from one end of the small island. Here she remained until midday.

The force of the wind steadily increased and with the rising swell and waves *Emma Jane* started to drag anchor, the auxiliary engine practically useless against such forces. Finally a large wave struck the vessel and drove her onto the reef. The mainmast snapped on impact and it was not long before the vessel was filled with water. The problem now was to get four people off—with no canoe. On the other side of the reef a long point of land jutted out from the tiny island. This became their goal. But how were they to reach it?

On the *Emma Jane's* deck there were three wooden skids which were intended for use in hauling out the vessel in the fall. The skids were thirty feet long by eight inches square. One was secured to a small line and put over the side. The young seaman, Christie, then lashed himself to it and by good luck managed to drift ashore on the point

RICHARD FINNIE

In 1937 'Scotty' Gall navigated the schooner 'Aklavik' through Bellot Strait (which had never been run before by a vessel of any size) to meet the 'Nascopie'. Here he draws alongside to exchange Western Arctic furs for trade goods, establishing trading connections for the first time in a single year via the Northwest Passage.

of land which they wanted to reach. Now that they had a man ashore everything that could be salvaged was passed from ship to shore, dogs, sled, gasoline drums, bacon, eggs, potatoes, deerskins, and dried fish for dog food which had survived the seas that swept over the vessel.

Scotty Gall had to go under water to recover from under his bunk a case of Irish whisky consigned to Paddy Gibson on King William Island. It was now getting late and, as Scotty recalls, 'I left my first command a very tired and despondent young man'.

The salvaged goods were cached in a secure place ashore. Some shelter from the cold wind was contrived with the foresail. As the four survivors were soaked, cold, and dejected, Scotty Gall decided to broach cargo and handed out a stiff drink to each. The four, in deerskins and their wet sleeping gear, huddled together under the sail and were able to snatch some sleep. Scotty Gall recalls that he dozed in fits and starts through a nightmare of imagined reefs and shoals with water breaking over them until daylight came and he was able to take stock of their situation.

The *Emma Jane* was still on the reef but seas were breaking over her. The island on which they were marooned was the outermost island of the coastal fringe, some distance into the open Queen Maud Gulf. Thus exposed to the full forces of the elements, it was unlikely

NATIONAL MUSEUM

An Eskimo of the Central Arctic using a bow drill of the traditional type, usually made with muskox or caribou rib bow, skin cord, and bone, antler, stone, or wood mouthpiece.

that ice would form for some time between it and a larger island four miles to the south, towards the mainland. Taking stock of what had been salvaged it was decided to use the food sparingly, since they did not know how long they might have to remain on the island. The salvaged food consisted of ten slabs of bacon, fifteen dozen eggs, one case of oranges, two tins of coffee, twenty-five pounds of wet sea biscuits, twenty-five pounds of oil-soaked rice, two tins of Oxo cubes and one carton of wet matches. Not very much for four people and six dogs for an uncertain period.

The island on which they were marooned was roughly a mile in circumference, with a few frozen ponds and all covered by about a foot of fresh snow. They searched for flat stones to make a wall for their shelter and used the mast booms for ridgepoles. The main sail was then stretched over the shelter and the overlap anchored down with stones. It was a small shelter, with just enough room to sleep four and a little space left over to sit in.

Ovilook and Canijuk put the matches in their hair to dry, which was how their people always handled wet matches, they said; a stove was fashioned from a ten gallon drum. The only tools available were an axe salvaged from the wreck, with a stone for a hammer.

The next day was fine. The bales of deerskins were opened and spread over the rocks to dry. On the third day, Ovilook announced the matches were dry enough to strike. With some gasoline sprinkled over wood chips, and with coal salvaged from the wreck, a fire was started. Now everything could be completely dried out. The only cooking vessel they had, however, was a one-gallon enamel pitcher which had to serve all purposes.

As the days went on, it became obvious that clothing, footwear and mittens were desperately needed with the

imminent approach of cold weather. There was a good supply of deerskins and sewing sinew, but no one had a needle. By a strange coincidence Scotty Gall found a broken needle in his artigee. It had broken off at the eye and had apparently been left there by the seamstress.

Ovilook fashioned a bow, mouth-piece and drill shaft from scraps of wood and for a drill cutting point he inserted tiny chips of flint, which his wife had searched for on the beach. Placing the broken needle between two flat stones, Ovilook held them firmly together with his toes and set to work with his primitive drilling equipment. In about three days, after hours of infinite patience, Ovilook succeeded in drilling a tiny hole in the needle, just large enough for one fine sinew strand to pass through. By rolling strands of sinew on the first one threaded, Caniyuk the seamstress had a sinew thread of sewing length.

Then there was great activity, in which the two white men joined, working and softening the deerskins to make clothing. For day after day the weather remained fine, but with a northwest wind blowing hard enough to prevent ice from forming on the sea.

On one of the salvaging forays to the wreck a gallon of paint had been found and this suggested the idea of building a canvas-covered boat. The idea was temporarily forgotten when ice was observed forming round the large island to the south and out toward the tiny island on which they were marooned. It was thought to be a matter of days before they might be able to walk over the ice. Just when their hopes were soaring a three-day northwest gale swept the ice away. Once again they were surrounded by storm-tossed seas. So it was decided to attempt to build a boat.

The slowly dwindling supplies gave cause for anxiety. One of the dogs was killed and eaten. Another small meal came from a gull which was shot with bow and arrow contrived from some wreckage and twisted sinew.

With the axe and a well-worn saw, found later on the wreck, and using a stone hammer fashioned by Ovilook, the deck house of the *Emma Jane* was stripped to make a framework for a small, flat-bottomed skiff. Ovilook pulled all the nails from the salvaged wood with his teeth. Then they had to be straightened. Wooden strips had to be sawn and rivetted to the ribs. All the holes were drilled with Ovilook's primitive drill and bow. A steam box designed to assist in the bending of the wood around the bow did not work, but by notching the wood with several saw kerfs this was accomplished. Canvas was then spread over the frame and given a heavy coat of paint. Even though it was freezing, this had to be done to make the canvas watertight and the frame rigid.

A day of favourable weather arrived. The skiff was loaded with four dogs and a sled, bedding, the four castaways, and two slabs of bacon. They set out for the island four miles distant. When within one mile of it slob ice held them in its grip and they were reluctantly forced to return.

The utter desolation of their surroundings and the great physical discomforts they suffered made each day seem like an eternity. Boredom brought on fits of gloom and despondency. There must have been times when each wondered if they could much longer survive such an ordeal. Cooped up on a tiny island, forever gazing toward the mainland some thirty miles away, wondering when and how they would ever reach it, took courage and fortitude, which, fortunately, they all possessed in full measure.

For two more days they waited until clear weather, without the usual northwest wind, set in and ice began to form. They tested the ice around the island and found it rubbery and bending. With the boat on the sled they started out and the ice bore up under their weight. The dogs were too weak to pull the sled alone so all took a hand. The going was terrible but after three hours they reached thicker ice alongside the island that had been their goal for so long. Here they decided to leave the boat which they no longer needed. The ice was now firm enough to travel right to Perry River.

After four more tiring hours of travel enough snow was found to build a snowhouse. They had no fuel to melt snow, but a handful held under the armpits and sucked through the fingers relieved thirst.

They started off again next morning. It was bitterly cold but the ice was dry and hard with a covering of snow. Due to their poor physical condition progress was tediously slow. After five hours of struggling they were cheered to come across a fresh sled track leading toward the land. Even the worn-out, starving dogs responded to this promising sign. Late in the afternoon they came upon a recently built snowhouse where someone had providentially left some frozen fish. This they ate ravenously, sharing it with the starving dogs.

The castaways remained overnight in the snowhouse and started out for Perry River in the early morning. Even the tired dogs showed eagerness. At long last smoke could be seen ahead of them rising from some buildings and they noticed a small schooner frozen in just off the island. On coming closer this proved to be the new post of the Canalaska Trading Company and the M. V. *Nigalik*, with C. H. Clarke in charge.

They wanted to continue to the Hudson's Bay Company Perry River post where John Livingstone was in charge. Clarke, however, persuaded them to rest and have something to eat. The survivors knew it was wrong, but they could not resist the temptation to gorge themselves on good food. Soon after eating they became violently ill with painful stomach cramps which forced them to remain at the Canalaska Company post overnight. In the morning they trudged on to the Hudson's Bay Company post.

Soon all the hardships each had endured became but a memory, but one never to be forgotten. This was but an incident in the life of a fur trader in the Arctic, not then considered worthy of record. ◆

The crew of the first aircraft to reach James Bay, 1922; (l. to r.) engineer Irenée Vachon, forestry official C. Townsend and pilot Roy Maxwell.

AIRMEN ADVENTURERS TO THE BAY

BY FRANK ELLIS

An aviation pioneer, Mr Ellis, was aboard the first commercial flight from Winnipeg to The Pas in 1920. He has recorded the history of Canadian aviation for many years; all photographs are from his private collection.

WHEN the English navigator-explorer Captain Henry Hudson steered his small sailing vessel across the North Atlantic in 1609, history records him and his crew as being the first white men to chart the great river which now serves the city of New York and bears his name, the Hudson.

A second voyage of exploration in a more northerly direction in 1610 earned for him and his men the honour of discovering the wide body of water between the Canadian mainland and Baffin Island, now named after him as Hudson Strait.

Sailing still farther westward, his ship rounded the western end of the strait into a vast inland sea for a still greater discovery, that of Hudson Bay itself.

Hudson did not live to enjoy the acclaim which surely he would have received had he returned to England, because his crew mutinied while still in western waters, and callously set him and his son adrift in a small open boat. Neither the navigator nor his son was ever seen or heard of again.

So the centuries swept slowly by, and as trade with the Eskimos and Indians of the surrounding Bay areas became established, sailing ships continued to reign supreme as the only means of transportation to much of the isolated country involved.

Gradually, the steam driven ships replaced them, but not until the 1920s did a new era begin which was to revolutionize travel in the entire north country.

At first the penetration was slow, as the sound of aeroplane engines came to the Bay, and only the waters of the southern extremity of James Bay caught the echoes for the first few years.

The first recorded plane to arrive in that vicinity was a lumbering, seventy-five mile an hour, HS2L flying boat, owned by the Laurentide Air Services Limited. It was the third aeroplane ever to receive licensed registration in Canada, and bore the letters G-CAAC as a result.

Flown by pilot Roy Maxwell, with Irenée Vachon as his engineer, it operated out of a base at Grand'Mère, Quebec, and during the summer of 1922, a number of government contract flights were undertaken to sketch and photograph a portion of the northern forested areas of Ontario and Quebec. It was during some of these missions that James Bay was seen from the air for the first time.

During the summer months of 1923 numerous aircraft flew over the same terrain on forest fire patrol flights or on photographic undertakings, but it was not until early August of 1924 that surviving records mention the landing of a waterborne aircraft on the surface of James Bay.

The Laurentide Company by this time had purchased an English-made, Vickers Viking 'Mark IV', amphibian flying boat, and under Canadian licence it was registered G-CAEB.

It was a versatile craft and later made a great name for itself in various parts of Canada, but its first claim to such fame began with its extended flight to James Bay.

Piloted by Roy Grandy, with B. McClatchey as engineer, it set off from Remi Lake, Ontario, with Mr

Aurie who was an official of the Department of Indian Affairs. Under his jurisdiction was the payment of treaty monies to Indians of numerous reserves bordering on the southwest coast of James Bay.

It was an ambitious expedition for that date, and the craft with its personnel was away from civilization for ten days, in which time some 1,000 miles were covered by air.

After leaving the Remi Lake base, their route went by easy stages down the Albany River, to Albany, on James Bay, and then north as far as Attawapiskat, dropping in at reserves along the way. They then retraced their flight back to Moose Factory, and finally to Remi Lake. It was a most successful venture, and opened the way for thousands of treaty money payment flights in Canada which have since become an annual affair.

It was calculated that the use of the plane cut at least seven weeks journeying by canoes to accomplish the same objective. There appears to be no established record to disprove the fact that G-CAEB was the first aircraft ever to dip its hull into the tidal waters of James Bay, or Hudson Bay.

Not until 1925 did aircraft reach the shores of the Bay itself, when the R.C.A.F. made a photographic survey of the proposed Hudson Bay Railroad to Port Nelson, using De Havilland 4s.

Two years later two open-cockpit, ski-equipped, Fokker 'Universals' owned by Western Canada Airways, flown under contract, transported surveyors, engineers and supplies to Churchill, which was to become the terminus for the railway, to supplant the never completed

The amphibious Vickers 'Viking' flying boat that carried the first Indian treaty payments to James Bay in 1924, and (below) prior to the flight, McClatchey, Aurie and Grandy.

Aircraft G-CAFU, 'City of Winnipeg', one of two Fokker 'Universals' used to fly men and supplies to Churchill in March, 1927. The crew (l. to r.) R. Ross, S. A. Cheesman, B. Balchen, and F. J. Stevenson.

base at Port Nelson. The two pilots entrusted with the job were Fred Stevenson and Bernt Balchen, together with pilot-engineers 'Rod' Ross and S. A. Cheesman.

The spring break-up almost caught them before the job was completed, but they finished just in the nick of time after making many return flights over the long miles between their southern base at Cache Lake, on the Hudson Bay Railway, and Churchill.

Due to the success of the venture, and the data gained, the government was able to make the momentous decision to establish Churchill as railhead for the completed undertaking.

To tie in with the plan, an expedition was sent north aboard two ships in 1927, from Halifax to Hudson Strait, to erect three bases on the shores from which aircraft could operate for a full twelve-month survey of ice conditions. Six open-cockpit Fokker aircraft adaptable for use on floats or skis, and one De Havilland Moth were shipped with this R.C.A.F. detachment commanded by Sqd. Ldr. T. A. Lawrence.

The aerial surveys were confined to the length of Hudson Strait and the wide entrance to Hudson Bay, where the most westerly of the bases was established on Nottingham Island. The other two were at Wakeham Bay and at Burwell.

A huge amount of flying thereafter took place by the six Royal Canadian Air Force pilots assigned to the job, together with observation and photographic crewmen who flew with them on many risky trips. The mass of data obtained has proved invaluable to shipping in those waters ever since.

The flying done under full winter conditions proved that the right type of aircraft were adaptable for use in the far north the year round, and the Fokkers became the forerunners of an influx of other types soon to follow in their wake.

Progressive mining companies looking eagerly to the north were not backward in adapting aeroplanes to their needs, and the earliest of them to do so utilized Fokkers or Fairchilds. One of the pioneer companies to use aircraft solely for its own purpose in mining exploration was Prospectors Airways Limited, formed in February 1928 by prospectors-aviators Robert Cockeram, Lloyd Rochester, Peter T. Graham and Glyn R. Burge. Their seaplane, G-CAIV 'The Prospector', forerunner of the Fairchild 51, was the first square-fuselage FC-2 type produced. They moved into the James Bay area to do exploratory work over a long stretch of the Eastmain River in 1931. Names such as Northern Aerial Mineral Exploration Company, Dominion Explorers, as well as

Western Canada Airways, still possess a thrill for those of us who were connected with the pioneering period which saw the northland become accessible by air. They were wonderful years, now long gone.

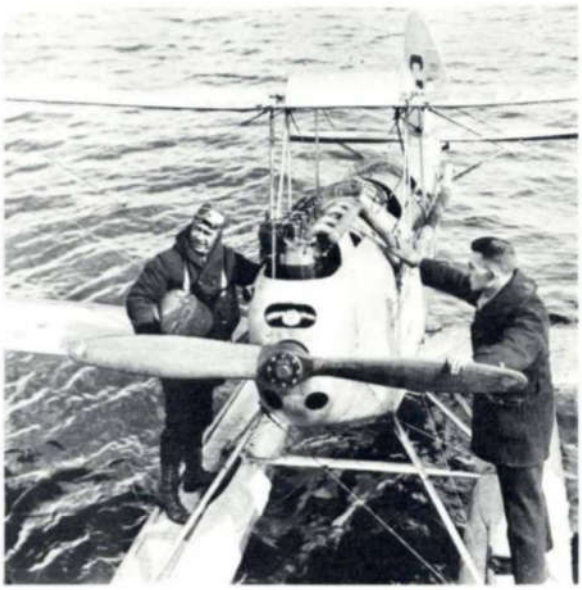
On 12 August 1928 pilot A. H. Farrington of W.C.A. was commissioned by his company to fly a Fokker seaplane from Winnipeg, and by easy stages to go to Eskimo Point, half way up the west coast of Hudson Bay, to return with a small prospecting party. The trip was successfully accomplished and stands as the first of its kind in that area. A total of 1,000 air miles was logged by the airman in accomplishing the undertaking.

Right on his heels a pilot 'Duke' Schiller of N.A.M.E. flew a load of full gasoline drums from Churchill up the west coast to Chesterfield Inlet, and thence to Baker Lake and return. He was preparing a cache for a forthcoming flight by mining executive Colonel C. D. H. MacAlpine and Richard Pearce, editor of the *Northern Miner*, who planned to fly from Baker Lake southwest across the Barrens, to Stony Rapids.

The day after the cache had been established, pilot 'Punch' Dickins and engineer Bill Nadin arrived at Baker Lake, in a W.C.A. Fokker seaplane, G-CASK, with their two passengers aboard. The flight across the Barrens of some 840 miles non-stop became history on September 3rd.

Again in August 1928 another first took place in the Hudson Bay area, when pilot 'Pat' Reid, of N.A.M.E. made the first coastal navigational trip covering much of the west and east coasts. Flying a Leoning amphibian seaplane, he started from Winnipeg to transport supplies to various prospecting parties, and return with their reports. Up the west coast his final call was at Chesterfield Inlet. He then retraced his route to Moose Factory on James Bay, and went up the east coast, touching at the Hudson Bay posts at Rupert House, Fort George, Eastmain, and finally Great Whale River, before setting a course back home, arriving in Winnipeg in mid-September.

The first truly winter commercial flight across the Bay occurred in January 1929 when two N.A.M.E.



Sqd. Ldr. T. A. Lawrence and A. A. Leech with the De Havilland Moth used in the 1927 Expedition.

At Wakeham Bay a Fokker on Eskimo sleds to protect the skis from rough ice.

aircraft were involved. One was a Fokker Universal, G-CARK, flown by T. M. 'Pat' Reid, the other a Fairchild G-CATL, piloted by H. A. 'Doc' Oaks. Their engineers were Kel Mews and A. Murray. The journey began from the company sub-base at Sioux Lookout, Ontario, and was for the purpose of bringing out thirteen prospectors, stranded at Richmond Gulf when winter had overtaken them. Without the use of aircraft they would have been obliged to remain in the north until spring.

From 1929, onward, the sound of aircraft engines increased in volume over the coastal waters of the Bay until there were few populated points so long isolated which could claim that unhappy distinction any more.

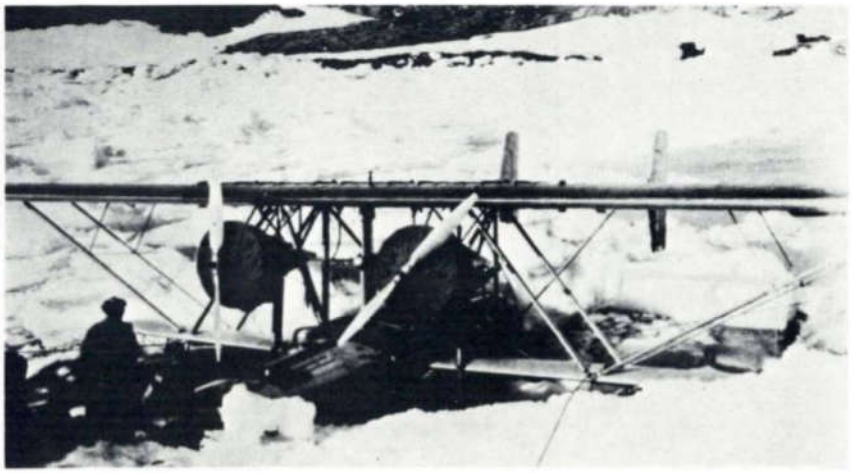
Not all of the flying in the early years in the area was of a purely commercial or military nature as can be judged by several happenings which brought Hudson Bay into world news.

When the widespread urge to fly across the North Atlantic developed after Lindbergh's flight in 1927, many such efforts were planned to follow a high northern route which touched at Iceland, Greenland, and Canada. One such was sponsored by the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper, although in this case the route was reversed. A Sikorsky twin-engined amphibian aircraft was the choice for the attempt, and it bore the strange title of the *Untin Bowler*, undoubtedly the whim of someone connected with the financing of the flight. The three American crewmen were pilot Parker 'Shorty' Cramer, co-pilot-navigator, Robert Gast, and passenger Robert Woods, the *Tribune's* aviation editor.

After leaving Chicago on 3 July 1929 their first stop in the Hudson Bay area was at Rupert House the same

In August 1928 the first flight up and down both coasts of Hudson Bay was made by 'Pat' Reid in this Leoning amphibious seaplane. Next January 'Pat' Reid (l.) with engineer Kel Mews and 'Doc' Oaks (r.) made the first commercial flight in two planes across the Bay.

Charles and Anne Lindbergh at Baker Lake, NWT after their flight across James Bay and up the west coast of Hudson Bay on their round-the-world trip in 1931.



The Sikorsky 'Untin Bowler' in a forced landing near Port Burwell in 1929.

The Bellanca seaplane flown by 'Shorty' Cramer (r.) and radioman O. Paquette touched down on Hudson Bay in July 1931.

day. Delayed there until the 5th by bad weather, they continued to Great Whale River, again to be held up two days. In spite of a heavy overcast they took off on the 7th, with their goal Port Burwell, at the entrance to Hudson Strait, but after reaching and crossing Ungava Bay, they became completely lost.

Luck was with them. They landed near an Eskimo camp, were given directions, and the next day were able to fly to Burwell without trouble. From there they had intended to continue to Greenland, but their luck ran out. Their Sikorsky was anchored offshore, and during the night a northerly gale blew up, causing huge masses of drift ice to be swept onto the southern shore. Caught in the maelstrom of tossing ice, their craft was battered to pieces, and by the dawn's light she had vanished from sight into the depths. The disappointed trio had to return to Chicago by ship and train, frustrated in their attempt to conquer the north by air.

It is hard to keep a good man down, especially should he be an airman, a truth borne out by the reappearance of 'Shorty' Cramer on Hudson Bay waters. On 29 July 1931, he and his crew member, Canadian radioman Oliver Paquette, landed at Rupert House on James Bay, having come from Detroit, Michigan, in their diesel-engined Bellanca seaplane. Their flight, scheduled to end at Copenhagen, Denmark, was sponsored by Trans-American Airlines Corporation, in an effort to plan a new passenger service to Europe.

They reached Great Whale River H B C post the next day for another over night stay, and then on 31 July the two adventurers winged over the sparsely forested and rock-bound country of northern Quebec to a good landing at Wakeham Bay, on the south coast of Hudson Strait. A supply of fuel for their engine which was supposed to have been sent by ship, was not there. To help them out, the post manager supplied them, free of

The 'Grönland-Wal' which landed near Povungnetuk, Hudson Bay 28 August 1931 en route from Germany to New York.

John Grierson flew from England to New York in this De Havilland 'Fox Moth' biplane, 'Robert Bruce' 1934.

cost, with full tanks of paraffin, which could be used in their engine in lieu of diesel oil.

On August 1st, leaving sincere thanks behind, the airmen hopped over the wide stretch of Hudson Strait and southern Baffin Island, to the H B C post at Pangnirtung. There they remained until the 5th, when Canadians bid them goodbye, which proved to be forever. They reached the Faroe Islands north of Scotland by the 7th and pressing on into stormy weather, they and their Bellanca vanished in the turbulent North Sea.

Then on 28 August 1931, from the northeast, came a twin-engined German Dornier flying boat, named *Grönland-Wal*, its four-man crew being pilot Wolfgang von Gronau, co-pilot E. Zimmer, engineer F. Hack, and radioman F. Albrecht. They were en route to New York, from List, on the Isle of Sylt, Germany.

Their first landing in Canada was ten miles north of Povungnetuk and, receiving directions from a group of Eskimos on shore, they were able to proceed to the H B C post without further difficulty. Fuel was needed. The post manager was in short supply and could only offer a few gallons, but it was sufficient to carry the airmen south to the post at Port Harrison the next day. Here they were lucky, and with an adequate supply on hand, they received enough to fill all tanks to the brim. By the 31st they had reached and left the post at Eastmain, heading south for Long Lac, Ontario, eventually to reach New York, and the Bay areas saw them no more.

Three years then went by as Canada's own bush pilots went about their business in their usual reliable manner, until once again a strangely registered bird flew in from the eastern sky. On 27 August 1934, the English airman, John Grierson, became the guest of the H B C post at Lake Harbour, on his arrival from Greenland in his

small, open-cockpit, De Havilland 'Fox Moth' seaplane. His craft was named the *Robert Bruce*, and he stated he was en route from London to New York.

He was off next day over the 380 air miles to Povungnetuk, and the following day he made the 500 miles south to Eastmain. After a day's rest, he went his way, first to Ottawa, and finally was successful in reaching New York on September 10th.

With trading posts spread all over the north, the Hudson's Bay Company decided to acquire an aeroplane of its own for use on Company business. Selected and flown to Winnipeg by Paul Y. Davoud, the Company superintendent of transportation, in April 1939 was a twin-engined, all-metal, low-winged Beechcraft, registered CF-BMI. It could be adapted for use with wheels, floats, or skis. The original crew was pilot Harry J. Winny and engineer Duncan McLaren.

An example of the early work the craft accomplished occurred shortly after its purchase when, in June 1939, the visiting Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr Patrick Ashley Cooper, together with Canadian general manager P. A. Chester, the assistant manager of the fur trade, Mr R. H. Chesshire, and Mr Davoud were flown on an extensive inspection tour which covered 4,685 air miles. They called at twenty-nine of the Company's northern posts. From then on, until sunk off Richmond Gulf by a storm on 4 September 1941, BMI was continually busy, summer and winter, on Company business.

Another Beechcraft, CF-BHA, was bought in 1940 and sold the following year. Beechcraft CF-BVM purchased in November 1941 was lost through fire on its delivery flight, and the air transport division ceased to function until the end of the war. In 1945 a Norseman CF-BHT was put into service and operated until 1955. In 1946 a Canso amphibian flying boat CF-BSK was added, and CF-BSL another Norseman. BSK was burnt in a ground accident at Yellowknife in 1947 and a second Canso CF-FOQ was bought that year and appropriately named *Polar Bear*. Since then there have been Beavers, a Grumman Goose amphibian, and in 1963 a Douglas DC-3. Currently the Company operates a squadron of three aircraft under Chief Pilot Art Atkinson.

Since the forties flying has developed to a remarkable degree in the Hudson Bay area until now a multitude of air routes criss-cross the territory. •

The Hudson's Bay Company acquired a twin-engined Beechcraft in 1939 and that summer Governor Ashley Cooper flew 4,685 miles on an inspection trip of northern posts. The group on the historic flight were pilot H. Winny (l.), Governor Ashley Cooper, engineer D. McLaren, co-pilot P. Davoud, P. A. Chester and R. H. Chesshire.

AN ARCTIC VETERAN

BY G. V. CLARK

IN JUNE 1914 the auxiliary barques *Active*, Captain John Murray, and *Morning*, Captain James Fairweather, sailed from Dundee for the northern whaling on what was to be the last venture employing vessels of their type to leave Britain. Captain Fairweather died in the 1930s but Captain Murray lived on until 1950 to be the last of the old-time whalers. He was born at Peterhead in 1868, the son of a whaling master, and made his first voyage at the age of 16 in the auxiliary barque *Windward* with his father. It took him to the Greenland Sea in search of the right whale, or bowhead, which as a result of ruthless killing was even then becoming scarce and hard to catch. The result of that voyage was one right whale, a few bottlenose whales, and a fair number of seals.

From the *Windward* John Murray followed his father to the whaling barque *Perseverance*, owned then in Peterhead, and this time they went up Davis Strait and spent the winter of 1885-6 frozen-in in Cumberland Sound. This was done deliberately so that the vessel might stand a better chance of getting at the whales when the ice broke up in the spring. The *Perseverance* was a tiny little vessel without engines—very much a ship of the past. It was in her that John Murray had the first of his many arctic adventures, when the vessel was caught in a full gale up Cumberland Sound and had to 'run the pack'—sail deliberately into it as the only alternative to being blown onto the edge of the ice. Later the barque was badly damaged in another gale and when they returned to Peterhead the following October they had just one right whale to show for all the dangers they had surmounted. As John Murray said later: 'And so ended this voyage of misfortune, the unluckiest one in all my days.' But they had one consolation: the single right whale they had killed produced nearly 28 tons of oil and 33 cwt. of dry clean whalebone—'the heaviest head of whalebone ever brought into Scotland by any whaler'. With whale oil in the region of £50 a ton and whalebone fetching over £2,000 a ton, that single whale did much to reduce the losses of the unfortunate voyage.

John Murray now forsook the 'fishing' for a time (despite the fact that it is a mammal a whale was always a 'fish' to the men who hunted it) and went away as an apprentice in a Dundee iron barque called the *Helenslea*, well-known for her fast passages. He only made the one voyage in her but it lasted two and a half years and took him to San Francisco, British Columbia, Australia, and the West Coast of South America. He knew San Francisco when the crimps were all-powerful and shanghai-ing was the normal procedure for supplying a ship with a crew; and loaded coal at Departure Bay, Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, not so very long after it had changed its named from Winthuysen Inlet. There, in a sense, he had his first contact with the Hudson's Bay Company, for it was the Company which had started the coal mines at Winthuysen Inlet in 1852, about the time another Company mine at Fort Rupert, in the north-eastern part of the island, was having to close down because of Indian raids and labour troubles. Later that voyage John Murray and another apprentice spent New Year's Day 1889 in jail in Caldera, Chile, not because they had drunk too much pisco but because they had refused to return aboard to

Captain Clark is himself master of a steamer on the Middle East and India runs, among his passengers being pilgrims and camels and sheep.

C. T. PEDERSEN

Flensing a whale alongside a sailing ship.

Captain Murray on the bridge of the 'Nascopie' which he commanded from 1928 to 1930.

work on the one day in the year they felt should be a holiday.

After the *Helenslea* John Murray went to the auxiliary barque *Esquimaux* as an A.B. under a very experienced whaling master, Captain W. F. Milne. In her he crossed to St John's, Newfoundland, for the annual seal hunt in which Scottish whalers were participating before going north after whales. About 300 'sweilers' were taken aboard for the sealing, men who came from all over Newfoundland to take part in a hard and dangerous game with sometimes negligible rewards. So far as the *Esquimaux* was concerned the entire voyage was a failure, for after killing about 10,000 seals she damaged her bow so badly in the ice that she had to return to Dundee for repairs and took no part in that year's whaling.

John Murray's next ship was a whaler even smaller than the *Perseverance*, the brig *Alert*, which like the *Perseverance* was without engines. With her big single topsails and tubby little hull she might have sailed right out of the eighteenth century. In her, again under his father, he made a voyage as second mate and bosun to the trading posts in Cumberland Sound owned by the Aberdeen firm of Noble. This was not a whaling voyage, the *Alert* taking out stores and bringing home arctic produce.

After this it was back as an A.B. to the old *Perseverance*, now owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, for a voyage to their posts at York Factory and Churchill. This proved to be quite an eventful trip. First they called at Stromness, in the Orkneys, to transship cargo from the *Erik*, another whaler owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, and there a baker's lad was taken on as cook in place of the regular cook-steward. That proved to be a bad mistake, for the lad, although willing enough to learn, soon showed he had not the slightest idea how to cook. Following endless complaints from the crew the captain asked John Murray if he would take on as cook, which he did until an old sailor relieved him. The *Perseverance* had been laid up in Peterhead prior to this trip and her crockery and cutlery, put ashore during the lay-up, had by an oversight not been brought back. So she sailed without these rather necessary items and the afterguard had to borrow a few old chipped enamel cups and plates from the fo'c's'le. In spite of these mischances the voyage went well enough until the barque was in Hudson Bay and approaching York. 'We were running in towards the land before a strong easterly wind,' Captain Murray related, 'with a heavy sea and poor visibility, when she suddenly ran ashore on the shoals on the north side of the Hayes River, on which York Factory stands. Next morning we found we were about two miles off the land, surrounded by mud and big black boulders. Later the doctor boarded us and one of his men, George Oman, piloted us up the river when we had got afloat again. As we sailed slowly up the river Hudson's Bay Company officials and their wives came down in a boat to welcome us. In those days the arrival of a vessel at York Factory was a great event, one of the big days in the year, but I'm afraid the afterguard of the *Perseverance* were in no fit state to welcome anyone, being quite frankly drunk, and I was ashamed that the Chief Factor should be met in such a way. The captain asked if I'd prepare a meal for them, so I told him: "I'll cook the food all right, but what about plates? You can't give it to them on those chipped old things you got from us." So the meal was cancelled and all the Governor got was a bottle of beer, something he had not had for a long time.' There was a lot of trouble on the ship at York Factory, due to drink, but eventually she got away and went up to Churchill, where there was another mishap. A Peterhead boat with the Company's chief representative aboard fouled the barque's head gear and capsized. No one was drowned but everything in the boat was lost. After these misfortunes the homeward run to London in autumn '91 was a good one.

John Murray next obtained his second mate's certificate and sailed as second mate of the auxiliary barque *Hope*, which had just been sold to owners in Newfoundland. After a not very successful sealing voyage he left her in St John's and returned to Scotland. Then he met Captain Inglis of the Hudson's Bay Company and was offered the choice of going second mate in either the sailing barque *Lady Head* or his old ship the *Perserverance*. He chose the latter because she was going on a wintering voyage and also because his brother Alex was now in command. That winter was spent at Repulse Bay and when the barque returned to Peterhead in the fall of 1893 she had the bone and blubber of four right whales aboard. On a later wintering voyage in the *Perseverance* Captain Alex Murray took his wife with him and it was off Whale Point, in Roes Welcome, that the barque was boarded by many Eskimo women eager to see their first

white woman, being particularly interested in Mrs Murray's then fashionable balloon sleeves. Captain John Murray tells us about the sequel: 'The following evening we had just about all the women from Whale Point aboard. They must have been working overtime for they were all wearing on their print dresses the balloon sleeves they had seen on Mrs Murray, except for one woman who had made her dress out of bath towels, with the fringes hanging down'. Later a child was born to Mrs Murray when the barque was frozen-in at Chesterfield Inlet. The baby was given the name of Percy, after the ship aboard which he was born, and was later christened at Churchill.

The *Perseverance* was John Murray's first command, on a wintering voyage in 1896-7. He went out to Churchill in the *Erik* and took over command of the barque from his brother. Only a few days later he rescued the captain (Miller) and crew of the American whaler *Desdemona*, wrecked on a reef near Wager Inlet. The *Perseverance* arrived home in the fall of '97 'after a hard voyage with little success'. Soon afterwards she was sold to an Aberdeen company who employed her fishing for salmon in Cumberland Gulf and she disappeared in the autumn of 1901 when homeward bound from the Arctic. According to Captain Murray she was the last whaler owned by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Captain Murray left the Hudson's Bay Company after the *Perseverance* and was mate of the auxiliary barque *Active*, owned by Robert Kinnes of Dundee. In 1899 he established a trading and whaling station for Kinnes on Southampton Island and it was during the years he spent in charge there that he encountered Sadlermiut Eskimos, who had never before seen a white man. These were the 'different people' first described by Captain Lyon in 1824, who were wiped out by disease in 1903. Two years later Captain Murray saw a survivor, a young woman 'far gone with consumption', who died soon afterwards. In 1907 he sailed as mate of the auxiliary barque *Scotia* under Captain Robertson, known among the whalers as 'Caffee Tam' because he would allow no strong drink aboard his ship. In spite of his attitude to strong drink there were ugly scenes aboard the *Scotia* that year when, in Reykjavik, Iceland, the crew got hold of some corn brandy and for a time took complete charge of the ship. From 1908 to 1911 Captain Murray was master of the auxiliary barque *Balaena*, killing enough whales during that time to give his Dundee owners a good profit. During those years he reached his farthest north, 82° 20', in Kennedy Channel. He could have gone farther, but in his own words, 'as I was looking for whales and not going to the North Pole, I turned back'. Then 1913 saw him master of the ketch *Albert*, famous in her way as having been earlier one of Sir Wilfred Grenfell's Labrador Mission vessels. He was at Lake Harbour a year later as master of the *Active* when he first heard of the outbreak of war and arrived back at Dundee on 28th October. Not a single whale had even been seen and the voyage was a failure. In the notes kept by Captain Murray he wrote:

'Here endeth the unfortunate voyage of 1914, which was the last of the Dundee whaling'.

From 1915 to 1919 he had the *Albert*, now owned by the Arctic Gold Syndicate, and this brief account of his life cannot omit mention of a man called Robert S. Janes, for Janes was the principal in a murder story which at the time received much publicity. When Captain Murray met him he was an arctic trader at Eclipse Sound and in September 1919 boarded the *Albert* at Pond Inlet and asked for a passage south. Following some disagreement over the terms of the passage he left, saying he would make his own way south. He never did, for later, at Cape Crawford, Lancaster Sound, he was shot and killed by an Eskimo called Nookudlak, the basic cause of the murder being that Janes was unable to get on with the Eskimos and treated them harshly. He told them that while only one bullet was necessary to kill an Eskimo it would need two to kill him; so following a tribal decision that he must die before he did more harm, Nookudlak took him at his word and fired twice. It was two and a half years before justice overtook Nookudlak in the person of Staff-Sergeant (later Inspector) Joy of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and he was subsequently sentenced to ten years imprisonment at Stony Mountain prison in Manitoba. In 1927 he was visited in prison by Captain Murray, who advised that he should be sent back to his own part of the world. This was done but Nookudlak died before his sentence had been completed.

It was in October 1919 that Captain Murray had the closest call of his adventurous life. He was in mid-Atlantic in the *Albert*, returning to the U.K. from the Arctic and running before a westerly gale when the ketch shipped a sea over the stern which swept the mate and himself overboard. The mate was never seen again but Captain

Nookudlak, who killed a trader at Lancaster Sound and served a term in penitentiary.

Left: The auxiliary barque 'Balaena' arrives at Dundee.

Right: The schooner 'Albert Revillon' after the topmasts had been shortened; she was later renamed 'Fort Garry' when in H B C service.

Murray was washed back aboard and although badly injured managed to get the ship home. In 1922 the tiny *Albert*, with him still in command, was able to do a good turn to the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer *Bayeshimo*, then on her maiden voyage. Encountering the much bigger vessel jammed in the ice in Cumberland Sound the *Albert* was able to take her stores and deliver them to the Company's posts further up the Sound. Having done this she then proceeded to rescue the crew of the Dundee schooner *Easonian*, destroyed by fire up the Sound, and took them back to Scotland—an epic in itself.

The *Albert* was sold after that and Captain Murray took command of Revillon Frères' schooner *Albert Revillon* in the arctic trade and remained in her when she was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company and renamed *Fort Garry*. In 1927 a tribute was paid to him by the Company's Fur Trade Commissioner, Mr Ralph Parsons who, broadcasting from the *Nascopie* said: 'The *Fort Garry* has set off for Pond Inlet and if anyone can get her there Captain Murray can'. The vessel had never been so far north before. In 1925 he spent a season at Lewisport, Newfoundland, in charge of the *Fort Garry* and another schooner, the *Fort James*, for the salmon fishing, and from 1928 to 1930 was in command of his first full-powered steamer, the *Nascopie*. In this ship he went to the annual seal hunt before proceeding north on Company's business, having as his sealing master Captain Abram Kean, then in his mid-seventies.

M.V. 'Karise' at Herschel Island with 'St Roch' in background.

Leaving the *Nascopie* in 1930 Captain Murray was at home for some time and then in 1932 took over another Hudson's Bay Company ship in a very different locality. Going out to Vancouver he joined the *Karise*, a small wooden motor vessel (542 gross tons, 149 feet long) which had been chartered by the Company, and in her went up past Point Barrow to the Coppermine River. The voyage, a difficult one for any ship, was made more so by the fact that the *Karise's* engine, one of those early diesels which were an engineer's nightmare, was constantly breaking down and throughout the log there are frequent references to engine trouble. '28th July, left Wainwright for Point Barrow, afraid to stop engine as no air to start it again—air compressor out of commission.' '3rd August, engineer lay down for a rest after 18 hours work.' '8th August, R.N.W.M.P. [R.C.M.P.] schooner *St Roch* helped us off jetty when engines not working. Sailed with about ten passengers, including Bishop Geddes and Rev. Morris.' '15th August, sent all hands on shore to load the schooner *Aklavik* for Read Island. Had a visit from Patsy Klengenberg and Ike Bolt.' The next entry is particularly illustrative of the changes taking place in the primitive arctic world Captain Murray had known for so many years: '22nd August, seaplane arrived to take out some of the furs.' On 25th August: 'Left Coppermine River with a very assorted crowd of passengers aboard—Police Inspector Eames, Eskimos and children and H B C post managers.' On 3rd September they 'passed a polar bear quite close today, the first and only one seen this voyage'.

The *Karise* arrived at Seattle on 27th September 1932 and Captain Murray left her there. He was now in his 65th year and the *Karise* was his last ship. He retired to Wormit, near Dundee, and died there in 1950, at the age of 82. If one were asked to sum up his character in one word, several of his qualities would present themselves; resoluteness, toleration for others, patience and modesty, and I think modesty would come first, for reviewing his life and real achievements, he was the most unassuming man I ever met. ◆

NORTHERN BOOKS

ANDREW GRAHAM'S OBSERVATIONS ON HUDSON'S BAY 1767-91

Edited by Glyndwr Williams, with an introduction by Richard Glover. Hudson's Bay Record Society, London, 1969. Vol. XXVII, lxvii, 423 pages, maps. Issued to Members of the Society.

(*Applications for membership, $5 a year, one volume published every second year, should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Hudson's Bay Record Society, Beaver House, Great Trinity Lane, London E.C.4, England*)

Reviewed by Chris Vickers

Andrew Graham had to wait for nearly 200 years for public recognition. It is true that a handful of scholars knew of his skill as a naturalist, his competence as a trader, and the accuracy of his anthropological observations, but for the majority of students of his age he was an unknown man. This has now been corrected. Under the skilful editing of Dr Williams we get a vivid picture of Andrew Graham, with an introduction by Dr Glover guiding the reader to the heart of Andrew Graham's contributions to knowledge. The volume is a welcome one during the Company's tercentenary year.

Graham came to Churchill in 1749 as a servant to the sloopmaster, James Walker. Between that time and 1775 he served at Severn, York, and Churchill. In 1775 he retired to live in Edinburgh and died in 1815. It was during the middle portion of this long life that he wrote the ten volumes of 'observations', more than two thousand pages of valuable data. The Society has wisely selected the last of these volumes for publication; it contains the meat of what Graham saw and heard during his twenty-five years of service on the Bay.

Graham was not an educated man, he had few reference books of any value, yet his identification of wildlife in a strange new land is amazingly accurate. He was the man who filled the requests of the Royal Society in London and the Edinburgh Royal Society for specimens to add to the expanding knowledge of zoology during the last half of the eighteenth century. He was not always right: who could be in a new land? He certainly had a wide knowledge of furs, yet he got the Raccoon mixed up with the Woodchuck. He names more than one hundred species of birds, most of which can be identified by the modern ornithologist. His measurements are frequently wrong, perhaps he depended too much on his Indian informants, and the reader will discover he failed to distinguish between the Peregrine Falcon and the Goshawk. He got mixed up with the Woodpecker family; apparently did not know the difference between the Hooded Merganser and the Red-breasted Merganser, and he confused the Glaucous Gull with the Herring Gull. Judged by modern standards Graham's contributions to zoology may appear trifling. This judgement is wrong. At the dawn of arctic zoology he made a significant and lasting contribution.

However, Graham did not get much credit for his natural history during his own lifetime. His notes and observations were buried in the Company's London Archives, and they were plagiarized in a most unwarranted manner by his friend Thomas Hutchins, surgeon at York from 1766 to 1772 and Chief at Albany from 1774 to 1782. When the second volume of Thomas Pennant's *Arctic Zoology* was published in London in 1785 it was Hutchins, not Graham, who was credited for information stolen directly from Graham's manuscripts.

My first introduction to Andrew Graham as an anthropologist was when I read the extract from his 'Observations on Hudson's Bay' published as Appendix B in Volume XII of the Hudson's Bay Record Society. In this he tells us that the Assiniboines '. . . are divided into many Tribes and for Strength and Valour and sound constitution are not surpass'd by any other Nation'. This comment is repeated in the current volume, and the geographical area they occupied is mentioned. Daniel Harmon seems to echo a similar thought when he says: 'The Assiniboins, of both sexes, are the best made, and walk the most erect, of any tribe I have ever seen.' These comments, and many others scattered in early journals, make me wonder why the anthropologists have not devoted more attention to the Assiniboine, certainly one of the important tribes of the western plains.

I agree with Dr Glover that most of Graham's general comment on the Indians deals with the Cree. He does not miss much. He covers their way of life, describes their burials, confirms the fact that some of the stone circles we find are tipi rings, and states they cooked in birch-bark containers, using hot stones. This last comment could be at variance with the findings of archaeologists who claim that 'Selkirk pottery' is the work of the Cree. We are told that the Indian preferred the bone flesher for working hides over the iron tools supplied by the traders, and that when birch bark was not available, hides were used to cover the frame of the canoe. This is quite interesting for John Tanner makes the same comment when he was in the vicinity of Brandon House on the Assiniboine half a century later. Graham describes their games and gambling, remarking: 'The men often try their skill with the bow and arrow. It is usual for each candidate to subscribe something, in order to raise a prize for rewarding the best marksman.' He adds some could 'hit a small bird at a great distance'.

Graham gleaned much of his anthropological data from the Crees around the posts, and from inland travellers like Cocking, Hearne, and Henday; there is, however, a ring of truth about them. He knew how to barter with the Indians, recognized he had to treat every Indian alike, and was aware of the fact that '. . . no leader has power to enforce what he would have put into execution'. This was the basic weakness of tribal government. He describes how the natives killed the bison '. . . by driving them on a pond or lake of smooth ice where they cannot stand, and therefore are rendered quite helpless'. This method of killing bison is confirmed by James Hector, John Palliser's principal assistant, when he notes that the Indians drove 'a band of buffalo cows' on an ice-covered lake and slaughtered them in December 1857. Then on a melancholy note Graham tells us that the Cree were not coming to Severn and other posts because they were leading an indolent life with the Assiniboine and Gros Ventres tribes. This was in 1768 and 1769, just about the time the Plains Cree acquired the horse, and the bison herds of the plains provided most of their economic needs.

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Hudson's Bay Company
1970

TREASURES

Graham's comment on the Eskimos is less elaborate. He had little contact with them, and it is evident that he consulted *The History of Greenland* by David Crantz, a Moravian missionary. He did know there was a cultural difference between the Eskimos of Hudson Strait and those who lived inland from the west coast of Hudson Bay. These were the Caribou Eskimos, evolving out of the older Thule Culture. And it is matter of regret that the artifacts of this changing culture that Graham sent to Edinburgh have been lost.

Andrew Graham's work was not confined to natural history or anthropology, he served the Hudson's Bay Company well. In his twenty-five years on the shores of the great northern bay he did his best to return a profit to his employers. He played a leading part in the abolition of private trade among the factors and lesser servants, and was capable of urging his point of view with great vigour, even if it was sometimes wrong. He was certainly responsible for the delay in sending Hudson's Bay Company traders into the interior to compete with the Pedlars from Montreal. But, when it became evident there was not any alternative, he became the most persuasive advocate of the needed move.

The years between 1749 and 1775 were great years along the Hudson Bay shores. It was the age of Isham, Hearne, Cocking, Tomison and Henday; Andrew Graham was their friend and in his own quiet and different way was their equal. Hilaire Belloc said '. . . the test of a book is the mood in which we lay it down, . . .' Readers will lay down this book in a happy mood and it will survive longer than the plagiarism of his friend Hutchins or the angry Edward Umfreville.

The interests of Mr Vickers, former newspaper editor, range through anthropology, archaeology, western history, and natural history, on all of which subjects he has written with authority.

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CHARTERED COMPANIES:
Their Role in the Development of Overseas Trade

By Rudolph Robert. Bell, London, Eng. 35/-; Clarke Irwin, Toronto, $7.00. 1969, 196 pages, illus., index.

Reviewed by Paul Phillips

As the advertising note on Rudolph Robert's book says, taken together the history of the companies is 'virtually a complete record of how the British Empire, now in process of being dismantled, was painfully acquired, developed and run by men who were in the truest sense adventurers as well as traders'. For this reason alone, the book is of considerable interest to the general reader who is not concerned with the details of the various companies or of the economic impact they had on Britain.

Robert is dealing with the trading companies which operated under a royal charter, from the Merchant Adventurers chartered by Henry VII in 1505 to the British North Borneo Company chartered in 1881 and including such well known companies as the British East India, the South Sea, and the Hudson's Bay companies. The author does not, in fact could not, do justice to the detailed histories of the thirteen companies in 187 pages and contents himself with sketching out the broad outlines of the development of the companies. This is both the strength and the weakness of the book, offering little that is new to the economic historian, but portraying clearly through the short sketches, the importance of commercial imperialism to the creation and expansion of the British Empire.

The role that the chartered companies played was not limited to building up British exports and providing sources of raw materials, although certainly this was important as the book indicates, but also to financing the English monarchy and later in acquiring, controlling and administering British territories. Elizabeth the First, of all monarchs, appears to have been, as well as a successful monarch, a very astute businesswoman. Not only did she grant several of the charters, in exchange for various forms of pecuniary consideration, intervene in international affairs of state on behalf of the merchant companies, and collect duties on the trade, she also entered directly as a silent partner in several of the commercial ventures.

Interesting as Elizabeth's personal involvement is, Elizabethan policy represented the high point in the early stages of British commercial expansion. A second feature of the relation between the interests of the ruling groups and the companies should be noted. This was the role the companies played as pseudo-governmental administrative agencies. Best known, of course, is the East India Company whose history Robert traces from its origins in 1599 as a trading body to the 19th century by which time it was, in the author's words, 'a quasi-governmental body'. Less known is the administrative function played by the various African companies or the North Borneo Company.

Possibly of greatest interest to Canadians is the chapter on the company 'which holds the record for longevity', the Hudson's Bay Company. Anyone seeking an exhaustive history of the H B C will be disappointed. In sixteen pages it is impossible to trace in anything like a comprehensive way 300 years of company history, from its origins in the expeditions of the French traders Radisson and Groseilliers, its charter incorporation under Royal patronage in 1670, its explorations into western Canada, its long battle with the Montreal based North West Company for control of the Canadian fur trade to its emergence as a major wholesale and retail outlet in Canada. Inevitably, the broad brush of generalization leaves details and events unexplained or glossed over to the dissatisfaction of the knowledgeable reader. In a book of this scope, it is unavoidable. Still, one could have wished for a less superficial handling of the Riel Rebellion.

Nevertheless, reservations on interpretation and detail should not obscure the fact that *Chartered Companies* is largely successful in doing what it sets out to do, recording the role of these companies in the development of British overseas trade —and in a very readable way.

Mr Phillips is assistant professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Manitoba.

ERRATUM

In the Spring issue, p. 22, it was stated that the name of the Fur Trade Department was changed to Northern Stores in 1958. This should have read 1959, the actual date being 10 March.

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